MARVEL
VOICES
PRIDE #1
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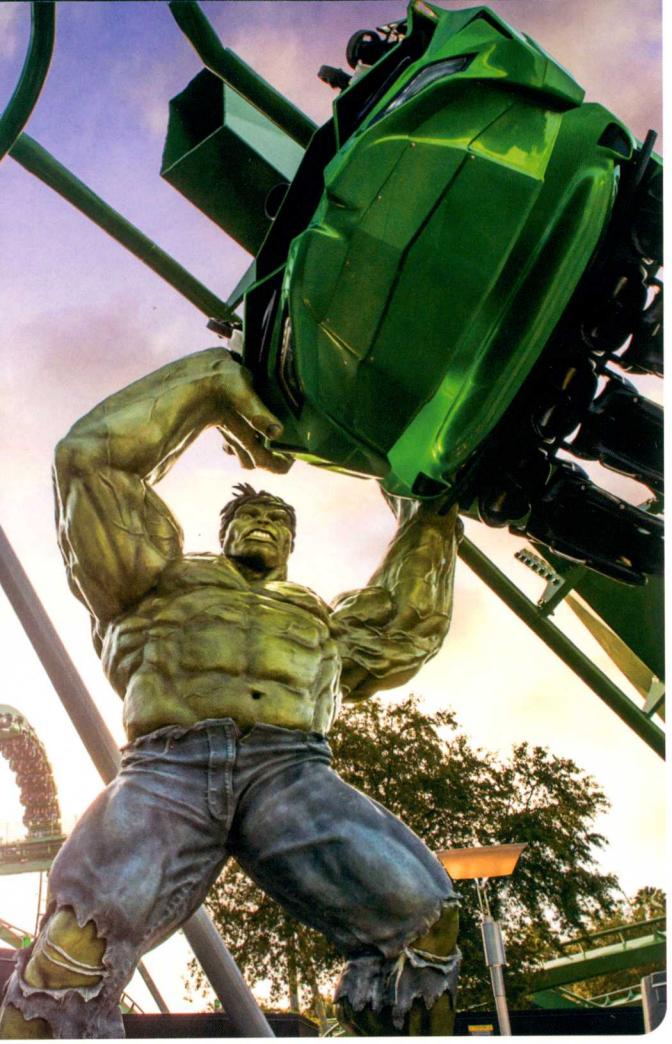
BONUS DIGITAL EDITION – DETAILS INSIDE!



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OUR SUPER-POWER

BY MARY CHIEFFO

I was first introduced to Marvel and the world of super heroes during elementary school. While I am technically a "Valley girl," having grown up in Valley Village, California, I never fit the petite, blond, fashion-forward Valley girl stereotype, but instead reveled in the glory of oversized T-shirts from the boys' section of Target and playing make-believe during recess. By the time I started high school, I was already 6 feet tall, a literal head above the rest of the kids. And while I did genuinely enjoy certain aspects of expected "femininity," and there was some part of me that wished I could fit more into the box of typical "coolness," those were never things truly authentic to who I was. Instead, I gravitated to what I was passionate about: theater, art history, and all things genre.

I was a proud nerd and a geek through and through and spent many summers gallivanting about the main floor of San Diego Comic-Con, enamored with the meticulously crafted cosplays of heroes, villains, and everything in between. Brené Brown says, "The opposite of belonging is fitting in," and when I walked the halls of SDCC, I felt a true sense of belonging—a beautiful euphoria of community and support as I watched cosplayers embodying their passions with such playful exuberance. I felt seen, even when no one was looking in my direction. All the obnoxious pressures of adolescence and the boxes I felt forced to cram myself into melted away. I didn't feel the need to fit in because I was simply allowed to exist in a world that made sense to me. Undoubtedly inspired by this beautiful oasis of found family, I discovered cosplay on the stage, in school plays that would eventually lead me to a career in acting.

In 2017, after four years of training at the Juilliard Drama School and turning multiple male Shakespeare roles on their heads, I was cast as Klingon Commander turned Chancellor L'Rell in *Star Trek: Discovery*. Like me, L'Rell was a woman who did not fit into stereotypes. She straddled her society's binary standards and fought against their established gender, sexuality, and moral norms. L'Rell's journey resonated with my own.

Smash-cut to SDCC 2018—my younger self can't believe she's sitting on a Hall H panel alongside my co-stars Anthony Rapp and Wilson Cruz, two literal gay icons and "actorvists." The adrenaline rush could not be more intense. The two spoke beautifully to the honor of portraying the first openly gay couple in *Star Trek*'s history. Much like Marvel, *Star Trek* has never shied away from the queer metaphor, but to have two characters overtly exist as their authentic selves was groundbreaking, albeit long overdue.

The queer community has spent much of our lives fighting to understand our own experiences through the lens of heteronormative storytelling. But queerness has always had its place in genre, even if that place existed mostly between the lines. As a 20-something young buck just beginning to reflect on her own sexuality, I found myself listening as intently as the audience to Anthony's and Wilson's words. Hearing them speak about their experiences as queer actors and fans was pivotal as I explored my identity as a queer woman in the world. In other words, representation matters, folks.

Listening to them and reading stories like the ones in MARVEL'S VOICES: PRIDE (2023) #1, it is clear that we are entering an era where queer subtext is transformed to simply text. Characters previously written in ways that only hinted at their sexual preferences or gender identities now flourish in vivid narratives written by diverse creators who are included in shaping their own stories. That is what real diversity looks like—normalizing representation in all facets of the creative process in front of and behind the scenes.

Even with all the progress we're experiencing, speaking to the queer experience feels incomplete if we do not acknowledge the continued onslaught of legislation that attempts to stifle and suppress the LGBTQIA+ community, especially our BIPOC trans and genderqueer siblings. When part of the community is hurting, we all do, and we are all hurting right now. Like the most spineless of super villains consumed by greed and power, there are those who see our potential and fear the impact we could make if allowed to fully exist in this world. Because queerness IS a super-power.

Our ability to exist with empathy and our power to change the world make each of us a hero, even when we cannot see it for ourselves. Together, friends and allies, family and lovers—those who understand, support, and celebrate our unique qualities—are creating a better, more inclusive world, where all perspectives and voices can be heard every time we acknowledge those powers within one another.

That's why an uplifting and influential space like MARVEL'S VOICES is setting a precedent for what progress and empowerment look like in genre. I couldn't be prouder or more honored to introduce another chapter of their epic legacy, celebrating the queer community I am deeply grateful to be a part of. As I write these words, it's like I'm back walking the halls of SDCC, feeling an undeniable sense of belonging. A feeling I am sure you will also experience as you read through MARVEL'S VOICES: PRIDE #1.

MARY CHIEFFO (she/her) is a queer actor/producer known internationally as the Klingon Commander turned Chancellor L'Rell on the Paramount+ series *Star Trek: Discovery*. Mary recently produced and starred in *Iago: The Green-Eyed Monster*, a musical-AR experience reinterpreting the notorious Shakespeare villain as a woman, co-created with Josh Nelson Youssef in collaboration with Viola Davis and Julius Tennon's JuVee Productions and Verizon, which premiered at Tribeca Film Festival in June 2022 (Tribeca X Finalist). Mary also starred in the short film *Every Morning*, a queer sci-fi love story, written by and co-starring her partner, Madi Goff (River Bend Film Fest WINNER Spirit of the Fest Award, Indie Short Fest WINNER Best Acting Duo, Best Original Score, Outstanding Achievement LGBTQ Short, LA Independent Women Film Awards WINNER Best Composer). Chieffo served as executive and creative producer on the film in partnership with Dr. Erin Macdonald's LGTBQ+-owned Spacetime Productions.

MARVEL VOICES PRIDE #1

START HERE

"OUR SUPER-POWER: INTRODUCTION"
by **MARY CHIEFFO** (she/her)

"EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ACES"
by **MARIEKE NIJKAMP** (they/them) // story
& **PABLO COLLAR** (he/him) // pencils & inks
with **MICHAEL WIGGAM** (he/him) // colors

"WHAT MAY BLOOM"
by **STEPHANIE WILLIAMS** (she/her) // story
& **HÉCTOR BARROS** (he/him) // pencils
with **OREN JUNIOR** (he/him) // inks
& **ANDREW DALHOUSE** (he/him) // colors

"PURIM SPIEL"
by **KATHERINE LOCKE** (they/them) // story
& **JOANNA ESTEP** (she/her) // pencils & inks
with **MANUEL PUPPO** (he/him) // colors

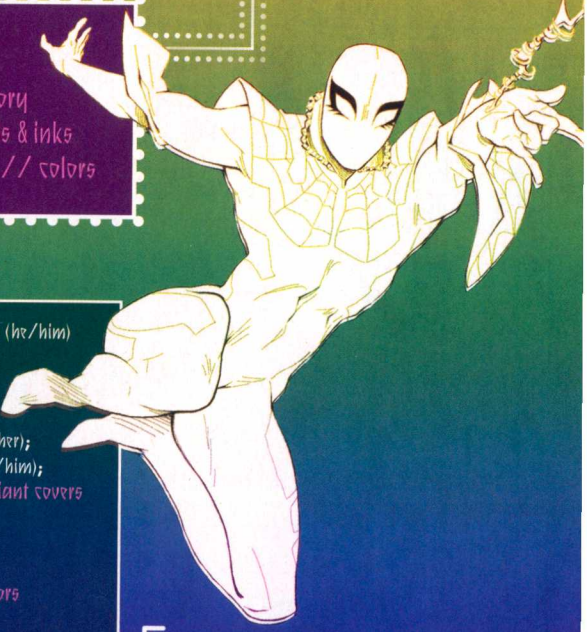
"EVERYWHERE"
by **SHADI PETOSKY** (she/her) // story
& **ROBERTA INGRANATA** (she/her) // pencils & inks
with **CECI DE LA CRUZ** (she/her) // colors

"BE GAY, DO CRIME"
by **SARAH GAILEY** (they/them) // story
& **BAILIE ROSENLUND** (she/her) // pencils & inks
with **RACHELLE ROSENBERG** (she/her) // colors

"NO TRESPASSING: BEWARE OF DOG"
by **H.E. EDGMON** (he/they) // story
& **LORENZO SUSI** (he/him) // pencils & inks
with **KELLY FITZPATRICK** (she/her) // colors

"JUMBO CARNATION'S ULTIMATE CREATIONS"
by **STEPHEN BYRNE** (he/him)

"TODAY'S LESSON"
by **STEVE FOXE** (he/him) // story
& **ROSI KÄMPE** (she/they) // pencils & inks
with **KELLY FITZPATRICK** (she/her) // colors



VC's ARIANA MAHER (she/her) with **VC's TRAVIS LANHAM** (he/him) ("PURIM SPIEL"; EVERYWHERE") // letterers

AMY REEDER (she/her) // cover

JAN BAZALDUA (she/her) & **TAMRA BONVILLAIN** (she/her);
P. CRAIG RUSSELL (he/him) & **LOVERN KINDZIERSKI** (he/him);
PHIL JIMENEZ (he/him) & **MARCELO MIAOLO** (he/him) // variant covers

STACIE ZUCKER (she/her) // designer

SARAH BRUNSTAD (she/her)
with **MR DANIEL** (they/them) ("NO TRESPASSING") // editors

ANITA OKOYE (she/her) // assistant editor

ANGÉLIQUE ROCHÉ (she/her) // consulting editor

C.B. CEBULSKI (he/him) // editor in chief

MICHELLE MARCHESE (she/they) & **WIL MOSS** (he/him) // special thanks

END HERE

Check out MARVEL.COM/VOICES for interviews and essays from a diverse array of creators like these!

GWENPOOL IN "EVERYTHING'S COMING UP ACES"

HEYA, TRUE BELIEVERS!

IT'S YOUR GIRL GWENPOOL, WITH A NEW PURPOSE IN LIFE!

EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY.

OF COURSE, BEING AN ICON COMES WITH RESPONSIBILITIES.

LIKE BEING *OUT AND PROUD* SO THAT READERS FEEL SEEN AND RESPECTED.

AND FINDING OTHERS TO TEAM UP WITH, BECAUSE ONE PERSON CAN'T REPRESENT A WHOLE *SPECTRUM.*

(BESIDES, AN ICON LIKE ME NEEDS HEROES TOO. SEEING MY OWN EXPERIENCES REFLECTED WOULD'VE SAVED ME FROM SOME EXTREMELY *AWKWARD* SITUATIONS.)

I'M JUST SAYING, NADIA-- *ACE FORCE* HAS A NICE RING TO IT.

GWEN, I APPRECIATE THE THOUGHT, BUT I ALREADY HAVE A TEAM.

I RECENTLY HAD A *MAJOR* EPIPHANY.

I'M *ASEXUAL AND AROMANTIC!*

SO I DECIDED TO BE...

...THE ACE *ICON* OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE!

AND LOOK AT ME, I'M IN A *PRIDE* COMIC!

AND THEN THERE'S THE HARDEST PART OF ALL: NOT DISAPPOINTING YOUR FRIENDS OR YOUR COMMUNITY.

HEROISM COMES IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES.

FOR ESU PRIDE CLUB, *JOY* IS HEROIC.

ESU PRIDE PARTY

SO I PROMISED THEM AN *UNBELIEVABLE* PRIDE PARTY.

ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO HANDLE THIS SOLO?

ABSOLUTELY.

WE ALWAYS HAVE A BIG PARTY COMMITTEE--

TRUST ME, I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.

I DID NOT, IN FACT, KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING.

GOOD THING I KNOW SOMEONE WHO DOES.

PLEASE HELP ME, QUEER ICON DAZZLER--YOU'RE MY ONLY HOPE.

LEAVE IT UP TO ME, KID.

I UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF PRIDE.

"YOU TAKE CARE OF THE DECORATIONS...

"...THE INVITES...

ESU

Pride

PARTY

OPEN TO ALL

THE QUAD, JUNE 14

"...AND THE PEOPLE. I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE MUSIC."

GWEN! YOU DID IT!

WITH A LITTLE HELP *FROM* MY FRIENDS--*FOR* MY FRIENDS.

ALL OF MY FRIENDS.

THIS IS NOT ME AGREEING TO A TEAM-UP. I JUST LOVE DANCING.

NADIA! YOU CAME!

HEY!

ASEXUAL? YOU'RE JUST BR--

LET ME SHOW Y--

AND *THIS* IS MY RESPONSIBILITY TOO.

HEY, PARTY CRASHERS!

STAY AWAY FROM MY COMMUNITY. IT'S *PROTECTED.*

TAKE A TIME OUT BETWEEN PANELS! EDUCATE YOURSELVES! BECOME A USEFUL MEMBER OF SOCIETY!

JEFF, YOU'RE ON GUARD DUTY. MAKE SURE THEY *READ!*

RAWR!

HEY, YOU, ACE KID READING THIS RIGHT NOW, I WANT YOU TO KNOW--

--BE PROUD. YOU'RE *PERFECT* JUST THE WAY YOU ARE.

THANKS FOR LETTING ME BE WHO I AM, GUYS!

ARE YOU READY FOR AN *UNBELIEVABLY* GOOD TIME?

I THINK TONIGHT WILL BE *UNFORGETTABLE.*

HAPPY PRIDE!

Be Proud

MAKE ME GAY

THE END!

NIGHTSHADE IN "WHAT MAY BLOOM"

MOUNT ATHENA, NY.

BANG BANG BANG

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE OPEN THE DOOR...

DO YOU KNOW WHAT *TIME* IT IS? WHO IN THE HELL--?

DR. BRASHEAR. PLEASE.

HELP ME.

LOGAN?

CHICAGO, YEARS AGO.

LOGAN, LET'S GO SIT OVER THERE.

THESE ARE YOUR GREAT-GREAT-AUNTS AND UNCLES ON THE *JOHNSON* SIDE OF THE FAMILY. YOU WERE ABOUT 2 YEARS OLD WHEN WE LAST SAW THEM.

DAMN SHAME THAT GIRL GOT SIDETRACKED THE WAY SHE DID. CALLING HERSELF *"NIGHTSHADE,"* GETTING INTO SCRAPS WITH CAPTAIN AMERICA OF ALL PEOPLE.

BUT YOU KNOW, BACK THEN, THERE WEREN'T A TON OF OPTIONS FOR PEOPLE LIKE HER, AND WHERE WE LIVED, IT WAS EASY TO GET CAUGHT UP.

SHE WAS RESILIENT THOUGH. YOU COME FROM A FAMILY OF IRREPRESSIBLE PEOPLE.

TILDA EVENTUALLY FOUND HER OWN WAY BACK AND A WAY TO MAKE USE OF HER GIFTS TO HELP OTHERS.* *THAT'S* IMPACT.

*AS SEEN MOST RECENTLY IN *CAPTAIN AMERICA: SYMBOL OF TRUTH* #9-11! --S.B.

YOU REMEMBER THEM, RIGHT?

MA, I WAS 2.

WELL, WE REMEMBER YOU, DEAR. YOU FAVORED YOUR COUSIN *TILDA* BACK THEN, AND YOU LOOK EVEN MORE LIKE HER NOW.

I BET YOU'RE SMART TOO, JUST LIKE SHE WAS AT YOUR AGE. I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT WHEN YOUR MOM SAID YOU KNEW SIGN LANGUAGE AND COULD READ.

YOUR COUSIN WAS BRILLIANT LIKE THAT. SELF-TAUGHT TOO.

I TELL LOGAN ALL THE TIME HOW SHE'S DESTINED FOR GREATNESS. THAT SHE CAN OVERCOME ANY OBSTACLE THAT COMES HER WAY.

I KNOW THAT'S RIGHT. AND LISTEN TO ME, LOGAN--ALWAYS REMEMBER TO LEAN ON THOSE IN YOUR CORNER, BECAUSE WHERE YOU'RE HEADED IN LIFE, *COMMUNITY* IS YOUR SECRET WEAPON.

YES, AUNTIE.

NOW.

DR. BRASHEAR... ADRIENNE...

I'M RIGHT HERE, LOGAN. IT'S 'BOUT TIME YOU CAME TO. YOU GAVE ME QUITE THE SCARE.

SO, YOU WANT TO TELL ME WHAT CAUSED YOU TO LEAVE TOWN TO COME PASS OUT ON MY DOORSTEP?

I, UH...I THOUGHT I HAD EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL. BUT I WAS WRONG.

I PANICKED AND I DIDN'T WANT TO BURDEN YOU. DR. BRASHEAR, YOU'VE ALREADY DONE SO MUCH FOR ME. YOU TOOK A RISK TAKING ME ON AS A PhD CANDIDATE.

I MADE A TERRIBLE DECISION, AND I...I THOUGHT I WAS OKAY. I DIDN'T KNOW WHERE ELSE TO GO.

LET'S GET YOU HYDRATED AND CHECK YOUR VITALS AGAIN.

YOU KNOW HOW DANGEROUS IT IS TO COME KNOCKING ON SOMEONE'S CABIN DOOR IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?

SLOW DOWN. I'M NOT MAD, I'M ONLY WORRIED. I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN TWO DAYS, AND YOU MISSED YOUR ADVISOR MEETING.

YOU KNOW I HAVE YOUR BACK, NO MATTER WHAT. TELL ME EVERYTHING. I CAN'T HELP YOU IF YOU AREN'T UP-FRONT WITH ME.

ESPECIALLY A BLACK WOMAN LIVING ALONE?

I KNOW...

...OW...

...MY HEAD.

WHY DO I FEEL LIKE YOU ALREADY KNOW?

LOGAN...

OKAY. I WAS ON MY WAY TO OUR MEETING, BUT YOU WERE TALKING TO CAPTAIN MARVEL...OR MORE SO, ***SHE*** WAS TALKING ***AT*** YOU.

PROJECT P.E.G.A.S.U.S. FACILITY, TWO DAYS AGO.

YOU STILL MEETING WITH DR. BRASHEAR LATER TODAY?

YEAH, AND I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO IT. OUR WORK COMPARING THE *COSMIC-CUBE* FRAGMENTS WITH *ISO-8* IS REALLY PROMISING.

I'M THE *AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY* FOR THE *HUMAN SPECIES*, ADRIENNE. THIS IS MY *JOB*--EVERY *DAY*, EVERY *NIGHT*, EVERY *SECOND*.

I KEEP THE *SKY* FROM FALLING ON YOUR *HEAD*.

BUT YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND. THERE IS MORE TO OUR RESEARCH THAN WHAT'S ON THE SURFACE. THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE INVOLVED, WHOSE LIVES--

NO, ADRIENNE. I AM SICK AND TIRED OF BEING *BLINDSIDED*.

SHUT IT *DOWN*. ALL OF IT. *COSMIC-CUBE RESEARCH* IS HEREBY *OFF* THE TABLE UNTIL I'M *PERSONALLY* CONVINCED IT'S SAFE.*

I STILL HAVE TO RUN SOME MORE TESTS, BUT I THINK I'VE HAVE CRACKED THE CODE FOR A NEW FORM OF SICKLE-CELL TREATMENT, USING A DERIVATIVE OF ISO-8.

IT'S WILD HOW THERE HASN'T BEEN MUCH ADVANCEMENT IN THAT AREA.

I KNOW, AND THAT'S WHY YOU'RE HERE, BABE. I'M SO PROUD OF YOU. YOU'VE BEEN WORKING YOUR ASS OFF FOR THE LAST FEW YEARS.

I'M PROUD OF US *BOTH*, GIGI. WE'RE GOING TO START OUR OWN LAB ONCE WE'RE DONE HERE AND CHANGE THE GAME FOR SICKLE-CELL PATIENTS.

*TRUE BELIEVERS REMEMBER THIS SCENE FROM *ULTIMATES (2015) #7*, RIGHT? --S.B.

I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS IS HAPPENING. WHAT THE HELL DOES CAPTAIN MARVEL KNOW? WE'RE DOING REAL WORK HERE. I'M DOING REAL WORK HERE.

IT'S TIME TO TREAT MY CELLS.

DING

GOTTA GO. SEE YOU AT HOME TONIGHT.

I WOULD HAVE TO START ALL OVER. ALL THAT TIME DOWN THE DRAIN? ALL I SACRIFICED TO GET HERE? NAH. SHE SHOULD HAVE STAYED WHERE SHE WAS-- UP IN THE DAMN *CLOUDS*.

SHE WANTS TO SHUT EVERYTHING DOWN? FINE.

BUT NOT *MY* WORK. I REFUSE TO LET THAT HAPPEN. I'M GOING TO SEE THIS ALL THE WAY THROUGH.

YOU CAN PROBABLY GUESS WHAT HAPPENED AFTER I TOOK THAT VIAL WITH ME. I WAS RUSHING, NOT THINKING--THE ONE THING YOU SHOULD NEVER DO WHEN WORKING WITH SUCH SENSITIVE MATERIALS.

LOGAN...WHY DIDN'T YOU SPEAK WITH ME BEFORE BEING SO RASH? DOING SOMETHING SO RECKLESS?

I DON'T KNOW... I...

DO YOU *SMELL* THAT? IS SOMETHING *BURNING?*

AM I GOING TO DIE? MOST PEOPLE WHO COME INTO DIRECT CONTACT WITH A CHEMICAL DERIVED FROM SOMETHING THAT MIGHT AS WELL BE A COSMIC CUBE *WOULD* DIE.

YOU WATCH TOO MANY MOVIES. BUT NO. I DON'T THINK YOU'RE GOING TO DIE, AT LEAST NOT ANY TIME SOON--IF YOU DON'T DO ANYTHING ELSE SILLY.

I RAN A FEW TESTS WHILE YOU WERE ASLEEP. THE GOOD NEWS IS, THANKS TO YOUR BRILLIANCE, THE COMPOUND YOU MADE FROM THE ISO-8 DERIVATIVE WASN'T LETHAL.

I KNEW I'D MADE A BREAK-THROUGH!

HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME *SIDE EFFECTS.* ONE OF WHICH ALMOST BURNED DOWN MY CABIN.

HOLY ŧG#%!

AHH! WHAT THE HELL?!

STAY CALM!

I'M ASSUMING YOU SPILLED SOME OF THE COMPOUND ON YOUR SKIN, INSTEAD OF INGESTING IT.

TURNS OUT I'M PRETTY CLUMSY WHEN I'M NOT WORKING UNDER THE HOOD.

MMM. WELL, EITHER WAY, THE COMPOUND SEEPED INTO YOUR SKIN AND ALL THE OTHER BARRIERS UNTIL IT ENTERED YOUR BLOODSTREAM.

SPRITZ

ŧSIGHŧ

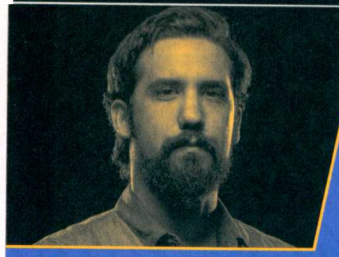
ONCE YOU GET CLEANED UP, WE NEED TO TALK ABOUT YOUR CONDITION.

YOUR WHITE-BLOOD-CELL COUNT IS NORMAL, BUT I HAVE NO IDEA IF THAT WILL CHANGE OVER TIME OR HONESTLY *WHAT* IT WILL DO TO YOU. IT'S OBVIOUSLY AFFECTING YOUR BODY CHEMISTRY.

SOUNDS LIKE I RUINED MY LIFE BEYOND WHATEVER THE OUTCOME WOULD HAVE BEEN WITH THE LAB BEING SHUT DOWN.

I'LL HELP YOU FIGURE THIS OUT--JUST LIKE I WOULD HAVE HELPED YOU FIGURE OUT HOW TO SALVAGE YOUR RESEARCH SO YOU COULD GRADUATE AS INTENDED IF YOU'D COME TO ME FIRST.

I KNOW. I'M SORRY, DR. BRASHEAR.



MARVEL

STORMBREAKERS

THE NEXT GENERATION OF ELITE ARTISTS

BUILDING A UNIVERSE

C.F. VILLA ON *AVENGERS*

It takes a mighty hammer to build a universe, and luckily Marvel has the Stormbreakers! Read on below for an interview with C.F. Villa, who recently wielded some of earth's mightiest artistic talent for the new *Avengers #1*.

You are recently launched the latest *Avengers* series. Tell us about your process in establishing the visual language for a new series.

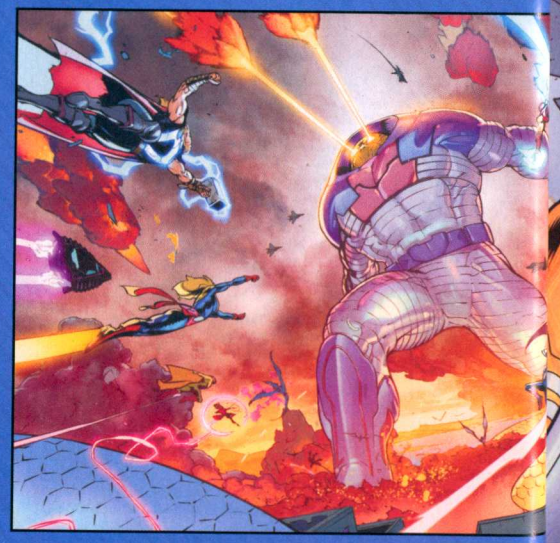
For starters, communication with the writer is key. As soon as I got the gig, I messaged Jed, and we started talking about what he had in mind for the tone of the book, the scale of the conflict and the overall direction of the story. By now, I hope people know what I like to go for in the visuals of the comic books I draw, but if not, I always try to make the action scenes as dynamic and kinetic as I can, and Jed gave me a good deal of info to start with in issue #1. All through the first issue, we have a large-scale fight with Terminus. It had to feel grand in scale, apocalyptic and chaotic like a true Avengers-worthy threat. So that's the language of issue #1. Beyond that, can't say much, but we have a few aces up our sleeves.

How does your approach when drawing the Avengers differ from your approach drawing other characters?

For a team book like *Avengers*, I want to make the whole group of characters shine. Now that said, it's Carol Danvers leading the team, and she will have a specific set of problems to deal with so, I do want to use that and make that story feel special for her. On a more nuanced and art-wise note, I always try to give the characters who I draw specific features different from other female or male characters I have drawn in the past. It gets harder when there are so many characters in the Marvel Universe. It's a challenge, but I hope the readers catch on to those details. If they don't, then I will shut up, accept the shame of my failure and try to do bet next time :) .

What is it like to carve out a new corner of the Mar Universe?

When working on a title such as *Avengers* or any ot Marvel book that I have done in the past, I tell mys that it is yet another chance to make an issue that is memorable as the ones I read when I was younger. T gets me pumped to draw more. That and my creative te whom I am very thankful for. All legends, living and in making. I must give my best.



THE AVENGERS #1

ON SALE NOW

CHICAGO, ONE YEAR LATER.
WE'RE SO PROUD OF YOU BOTH!
I'M CLAPPING REGARDLESS OF THEM TELLING US TO HOLD OUR APPLAUSE.
OH, I KNOW, DAD.
I SEE LOGAN GETS HER REBELLIOUS STREAK FROM MR. LEWIS.
UMBLE
WHAT'S THIS?! EARTHQUAKES DON'T HAPPEN IN CHICAGO!
MOM, I DON'T THINK IT'S AN EARTHQUAKE!
MAKE WAY! I HAVE A SPECIAL MESSAGE FOR TODAY'S GRADUATES!
ABSOLUTELY NOT! I WON'T LET SOME RANDO HAVING A BAD DAY RUIN OUR GRADUATION.
TIME TO PUT THIS POWER-HARNESSING SUIT TO THE TEST.
LOGAN! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I KNOW YOU HEARD YOUR MOMMA!

YOU THOUGHT YOU COULD BAR *ME*--SIMON EBEZ--FROM GRADUATION? NOW YOU'LL--

WAIT. WHAT THE HELL IS *THAT?*

DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA THE KIND OF POWER THAT'S IN THIS SUIT I CREATED?

TO BE REAL WITH YOU, I DON'T CARE. IT COULDN'T BE ALL THAT POWERFUL IF YOU'RE OUT HERE INSTEAD OF INSIDE WITH THE REST OF US GRADUATING TODAY.

WE ALL HANDLE OUR SHORTCOMINGS DIFFERENTLY. YOU BUIL THIS STARK TECH KNOCK AND I ACCIDENTALLY GA MYSELF CHEMICAL-ALTERING POWERS.

BUT HEY, SINCE YOU DECIDED USE IT TO HAVE A VE PUBLIC AND DANGERO TANTRUM, YOU'VE GI ME THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY--

--TO TEST MY POWER LIMITS GUILT-FREE!

MY MUSCLES FEEL LIKE THEY'RE DOING THE PERCOLATOR, WHICH MEANS MY ***SUPER-STRENGTH*** IS HOLDING UP!

WHO ARE YOU?

NOW WE'RE GETTING SOMEWHERE. MY NAME IS NONE OF YOUR CONCERN THOUGH. SHUT THIS JANKY PIECE OF TECH DOWN BEFORE I DO IT FOR YOU.

"NONE OF YOUR CONCERN THOUGH" IS A WEIRD NAME. AND NO, I DON'T THINK I WILL.

TOSS

YAH!

THUD

UGH!

THAT WAS TOO EASY. NOW WHERE WAS I? OH, RIGHT. RUINING THIS GRADUATION CEREMONY.

ALERT! ALERT! SYSTEMS MALFUNCTIONING!

?!

ZEB WELLS • JOHN ROMITA J
PLUS! BONUS STORIES TEEING UP SPIDER-STORIES W
PATRICK GLEASON! KAARE ANDREWS!

the AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #31

YOU SURE YOUR FRIENDS ARE OKAY?
YEP.
THEY ALL HAVE VERY IMPOSING GUNS.
THEY'RE COOL.
SO WE'RE ALL SAFE?
WE ARE ALL SAFE.

IT'S TIME FOR THE SUPER-VILLAIN WEDDING OF THE YEAR -
AND PETER PARKER IS THE BEST MAN!
JULY 2023

© 2023 M

I CAN'T PRODUCE ANY MORE SUPER-POWERED ATP. SO...

HEY BOZO! WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU RAPIDLY COOL METAL THAT HAS BEEN HEATED BEYOND ITS NORMAL CONDITIONS?
YOU GET MY *QUENCHING* POWERS!

HEY! I-- I CAN'T MOVE!
WHAT THE *BEEP* DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING? DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH THIS COST ME TO MAKE?

WHOA! I'M GLAD THAT WORKED AND MY SUIT HELD UP.
I COULD HAVE INCINERATED OR FROZEN EVERYONE IN A TWO-BLOCK RADIUS.

YOU MIGHT NEED THE JAWS OF LIFE TO GET HIM OUT OF THAT HARDENED STEEL, BUT HE'S ALL YOURS, OFFICERS.

AMAZING!
SHE SAVED US!
WHAT'S YOUR NAME, HERO?

LATER THAT DAY.

THOSE POLICE OFFICERS ARE PROBABLY STILL TRYING TO GET THAT FOOL OUT OF THAT THING.

I BET.

WHAT MADE YOU FINALLY DECIDE TO WEAR THE SUIT TODAY? I THOUGHT YOU WERE AGAINST USING YOUR POWERS PUBLICLY?

I WAS, BUT TODAY SYMBOLIZED TWO MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN MY LIFE.

ONE, GRADUATING WITH MY DOCTORATE IN BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE.

THE OTHER WAS FINALLY BEING AT PEACE WITH MY POWERS.

BOTH ACHIEVEMENTS I OWE TO *YOU*.

OH, NO, LOGAN. YOU OWE IT TO ***YOURSELF***. I ONLY DID WHAT I COULD TO HELP--YOU DID ALL THE HEAVY LIFTING. QUITE LITERALLY AT TIMES.

YOU MASTERED YOUR POWERS AND YOUR FIELD OF STUDY.

I KNOW, BUT I JUST REALLY APPRECIATE YOU.

SO, IS IT SAFE TO ASK IF YOU'VE GIVEN WHAT I SAID ABOUT USING YOUR POWERS ON A REGULAR BASIS ANY MORE THOUGHT?

LIKE, BE A SUPER HERO? *PSSH*... HARDLY.

LOGAN, YOU CAN DO BOTH. YOU CAN STILL BE THE SCIENTIST YOU WANT TO BE ***AND*** HELP OTHERS WHO CAN'T HELP THEMSELVES. YOU'D HAVE IMPACT IN AND OUT OF THE LAB. MY DAD DOES.

YOUR DAD IS THE MIGHTY ***BLUE MARVEL***.

I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME BUTTING IN--

--BUT AFTER WHAT I WITNESSED TODAY, DR. BRASHEAR IS RIGHT.

BEFORE YOU RESPOND, HONEY, I WANT YOU TO TALK TO SOMEONE I KNOW YOU'VE ADMIRED FOR A LONG TIME. THIS IS YOUR COUSIN, ***TILDA JOHNSON***.

NIGHTSHADE?!

HELLO, DR. BRASHEAR.

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, TILDA.

HEY, LITTLE COUSIN. CONGRATULATIONS TO YOU.

BUT, *UH*, "NIGHTSHADE" IS THE OLD ME. I DON'T NEED THAT NAME ANYMORE.

I HEARD *YOU* MIGHT BE LOOKING FOR A NAME TO MATCH THAT NICE SUIT YOU GOT THOUGH. AND FROM EVERYTHING I HEARD FROM YOUR MOM AND ADRIENNE...

...WELL, I'D BE HONORED IF YOU TOOK THAT TITLE. AND ACTUALLY, I WAS HOPING YOU COULD HELP ME OUT WITH A PROJECT I'M WORKING ON.

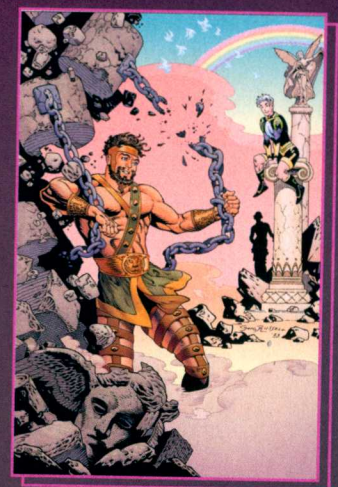
UMM...I WOULD LOVE TO! TELL ME ALL ABOUT IT.

THE END...OR THE BEGINNING?

AN INTERVIEW WITH P. CRAIG RUSSELL

BY ANGÉLIQUE ROCHÉ

EDITED FOR BREVITY



Marvel Voices (2023) #1
variant cover by
P. Craig Russell & Lovern Kindzierski

When artist P. Craig Russell's father asked him if he could drop by Dan Atkins' studio in 1972, the avid comics fan was a fine-arts major studying paint at the University of Cincinnati. That meeting would give a talented college student a chance of a lifetime. That day, Atkins asked him to take a risk, drop out of school for six months, and work with him in his studio. He couldn't have known that dropping out of college would be the first step to a lifelong career. Fifty years and a library of eighty major works later, P. Craig's career as a freelance artist blending his long love of art, music, and storytelling has helped shape the world of comics and the evolution of graphic novels.

While he is known for being a "trailblazer" for representation in the industry as the first mainstream comic-book artist to come out as openly gay, P. Craig's award-winning art—including multiple Harvey and Eisner Award-winning projects—has been no less than groundbreaking. Over the last half a century, P. Craig has created some of Marvel's most notable covers (including a variant cover for this anthology); collaborated with dozens of writers, including Neil Gaiman, Don McGregor, Marv Wolfman, and Roy Thomas; and co-created over fifty characters in the Marvel Universe alone. I had a chance to chat with P. Craig about his work and his unique approach to storytelling through art.

AR: How would you describe what you do?

PCR: Well, I'm doing pretty much the same thing everyone else in the book is doing. I tell stories and draw pictures. Even more than the drawing is the telling of the story. Which, for me, is taking the story apart. Whether I'm working with an original script or an adaptation, taking the story apart and putting it back together in another form is the most fun for me.

AR: What led you down the path of telling stories through art?

PCR: I grew up reading comics from Harvey Comics to *Uncle Scrooge* and then *Archie* in middle school. About that time, came the launch of Marvel Comics [referring to the transition to Marvel Comics in the 1960s]. A friend had *Fantastic Four #3-14*. I read them, and that was the end of that. I didn't really consider telling stories with pictures so much until it was practically laid on my plate. I loved drawing, but I had twin interests in music and art. What got me going was when I was asked to head decorations for the junior/senior prom dance my junior year. The theme was "Strawberry Fields."

AR: "Strawberry Fields," like the Beatles?

PCR: Yes. We did three 9x12 paintings of just psychedelia. And I loved it. I found out I had a knack for planning and executing and had a great time. So, I thought, okay, I'm doing art.

AR: But music has still played a huge role in your work.

PCR: Yeah. I started studying piano in fifth grade, and I've loved classical music since kindergarten. I just recognized and responded to it. But my major influence was nineteenth-century program music. Music that tells a story like Don Juan or Sprach Zarathustra. It's pure music, but it's also narrating a story you can follow. It has a constant flow and development. I feel that when I'm laying out a story or drawing a single image. There is a flow between every element of the picture.

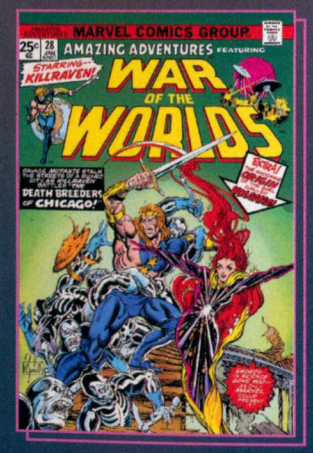
AR: How did you get your start in comics?

PCR: I worked in Dan Atkins' studio in Ohio for several months in 1972 before finishing college and moving to New York. He sponsored me, Val Merrick, and Paul Galassi, shepherding us all together. He provided layouts or thumbnails, we'd do the work, and he'd send it to Marvel.

I started with three short horror stories—including two four-pagers and a six-pager—then I was bumped up to doing a full eighteen-page book, which sounds crazy now when I'm doing four-hundred-page graphic novels. But the first time I had eighteen pages, it seemed like so much to do.

AR: What was the industry like when you first started?

PCR: I was still working for Marvel in Cincinnati, but it wasn't till after I graduated, in January of '74, that I moved to New York and regularly went into the Marvel offices. Compared to today, it was almost like a mom-and-pop operation. You could walk in anytime, day or night, grab a drawing board, and work. When I was working on the Killraven story "War of the Worlds" part 2 (*Amazing Adventures #28*)—the first comic I inked and colored myself—I lived there for 48 hours, sleeping in the front office. It was just very, very relaxed.



Amazing Adventures #28
cover by P. Craig Russell

AR: You've been doing this for a long time. What made you stay?

PCR: I love telling stories. I also want to leave a body of work with as few *embarrassing* moments in it as possible. As a result, I've pretty much gone my own way. After they canceled Killraven, Mike Friedrich's *Star Reach* started up. I did *Parsifal (1978)*, and from there, I pretty much made my own path.

AR: That path has led you to work with countless collaborators.

PCR: I think it's because they know I do my absolute best to tell their story. Like I say, there's the story being told, and there's the telling of the story. They've invented these characters and these situations, and I have to take that and tell it by coming up with visual constructs and finding stuff in their words that they haven't seen. I try to visualize [the constructs] as much as I can. Because ultimately, it has to work as a visual structure, as a visual form. Just like opera is a musical form, it really works best if you have a good libretto. Same thing with a Broadway musical; you need good words.

AR: As a member of the LGBTQIA+ community, what has it been like to see comics evolve?

PCR: Well, in 1991, in an interview for *The Comics Journal*, I came out just in the course of an interview. Apparently, I was the first mainstream artist to do that. So that was sort of an event, I guess. The thing is, I didn't experience any fallout or backlash from that, at least certainly not in our field or with fellow artists and writers or people who read *The Comics Journal*. So it was just like, okay, that was great.

Interviewer's Note: In fact, it was a pretty casual exchange toward the end of a lengthy 29-page interview, including panels and references. When prompted about his reputation for "drawing the most beautiful men in comics," P. Craig simply responded, "Well, I suppose it's because I'm gay. It's easier to see that, to draw beefcake instead of cheesecake… Just another left-handed, night-dwelling, gay libertarian cartoonist." The Comics Journal, No. 147 (1991).

AR: Do you feel there's something special about comics and graphic novels now?

PCR: Yeah, absolutely. Just the range of books and subject matter that is out there. When I started, the field had shrunk to almost entirely super heroes. When we did the first Oscar Wilde book, the publisher had trouble getting it into children's book sections because they said, "Well, that's a comic book. We do illustrated books." Well, they're over that now. It's part of the larger landscape now.

AR: How has your creative process evolved or changed since you started?

PCR: I'm still analog. I'm digital when the coloring is done by someone else. But when I'm producing a single image myself, I do it in watercolor, wash, and temper. On the black-and-white drawings—that's what I've spent the last almost year doing—I took all the Norse Mythology covers and did coloring on some of the originals, redrew a few, and then added six new ones. That's my Opus 81—the Norse Saga in 24 panels.

AR: AR: How long does it take you from beginning to end on a piece?

PCR: I'm a little slower now, and I take my time with it more. I'll do one or two pages, maybe three pages, a week of finished art. There were times when I did a page a day for thirty days, penciling and inking, but I was also working nine hours a day. I'm more likely to do four or five hours a day now.

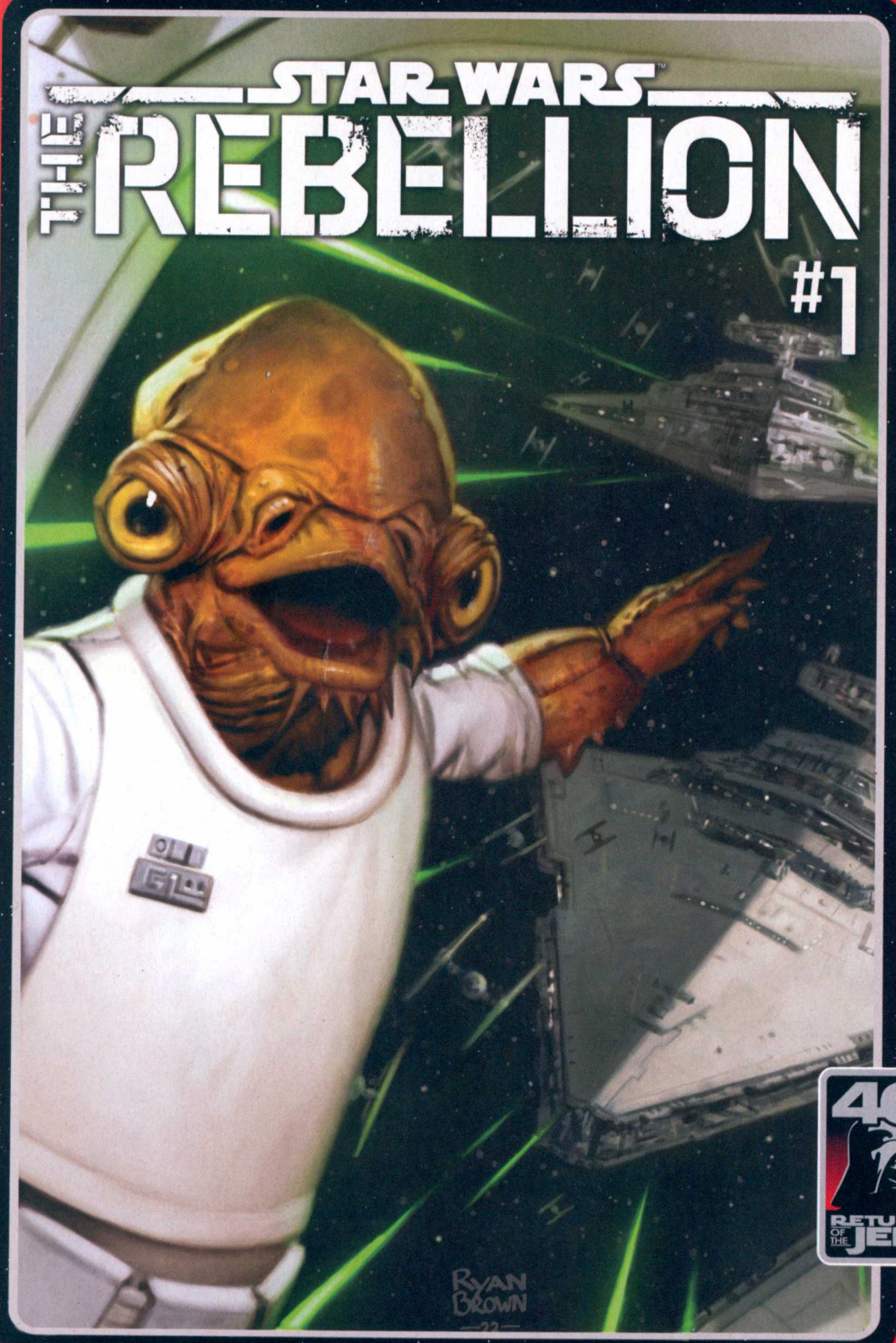
AR: Do you have a dream project?

PCR: Oh, I've got a bucket list. One thing I've been putting off for decades is the final Oscar Wilde fairy tale, "The Fisherman and His Soul." I laid it out 25 years ago, but all these other projects keep coming in. I am ready to start as soon as I put the finishing touches on [Opus] 81.

AR: It is so clear you truly believe stories are magic.

PCR: Absolutely! And cracking the code. When working with a pre-existing property, it's about finding that visual magic. So many times, writers can write things that the reader will just automatically accept, but an artist has to find a way to visualize it and make it look plausible. ■

ALEX SEGURA • MATT HORAK • COVER BY RYAN BROWN



THE FATE OF THE REBELLION RESTS ON MON MOTHMA'S HEAD!

Disney · LUCASFILM · MARVEL

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JULY 2023

THIS DOES NOT LOOK RIGHT. I KNOW HE SAID THAT THIS RESTAURANT WAS A HOLE-IN-THE-WALL, BUT...
...THIS IS A WHOLE 'NOTHER LEVEL. WHEN I SAID I WAS INTO NEW EXPERIENCES, THIS IS NOT WHAT I MEANT.
CLEARLY, I AM PICKING THE RESTAURANT NEXT TIME.
WAY
FASHION
IF THERE'S A SECOND DATE.
CRRSH
WHAT THE--?

ALARM ALARM ALARM

KAVINSKY'S PAWN SHOP

CASH 4 GOLD & SILVER

JEWELRY & LOAN

KAVINSKY...I KNOW THAT NAME. THEIR DAUGHTER'S IN FASHION SCHOOL IN THE CITY. THEY CAN'T AFFORD TO LOSE BUSINESS.

BEEN AWHILE SINCE WEB-WEAVER SHOWED HIS FACE AROUND HERE. NOW'S THE PERFECT TIME.

I AM GOING TO BE SO LATE FOR THIS DATE.

STOP!

THWIP

!!!

DANGIT!

HOW IS THIS KID SO FAST?

ONE MORE TRY...

GOTCHA!

NO!

I THINK MOST EVERYTHING'S IN THERE. LOOKS LIKE HE MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN AWAY WITH ONE THING.

THANK YOU SO MUCH, COOPER.

WOW, WHAT AN UPSTANDING YOUNG MAN!

I REMEMBER YOUR DAUGHTER MOLLY FROM A CLASS. I WAS HER T.A.

HERE, LET ME HELP.

WHAT WERE YOU DOING UP HERE?

I WAS ***SUPPOSED*** TO BE ON A DATE. I'M PRETTY SURE HE THINKS I STOOD HIM UP.

OH NO...

SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT'S MISSING!

THIS PLATE HAS A ***KIDDUSH CUP*** THAT MATCHES IT. IT'S VERY SENTIMENTAL TO THE FAMILY.

ERR, WHY DID THEY BRING IT TO A ***PAWN-SHOP*** IF IT'S SENTIMENTAL?

THEY NEEDED CASH. I DON'T MAKE MONEY FROM SELLING THINGS, YOU KNOW. THIS IS LIKE A BANK-- WE LOAN OUT MONEY AND HOLD ITEMS AS COLLATERAL.

THIS FAMILY WILL DEFINITELY WANT THEIR THINGS BACK.

I'M SORRY, MR. KAVINSKY, I HAVE TO RUN. BUT I PROMISE--

marcos

ARE YOU KIDDING ME?!

WHOOSH

VINTAGE

WELL. I CAN'T LEAVE THIS STUFF IN THE STREET, AND AT LEAST I CAN RETURN THE STOLEN GOODS... MINUS WHATEVER THEY TOOK.

"--I'M ON THE CASE."

75%

cute app boy (ASHER)

I'm really sorry I got hung up at work

I wish you'd let me know before though.

I'll come out your way.

We can get drinks.

The night is young!

Are you sure? I'm all the way across the river.

Don't worry. I'm sure I can make it out there.

I DON'T KNOW WHY IT'S BOTHERING ME SO MUCH THAT SOMEONE STOLE THIS KIDDUSH CUP OR WHATEVER FROM MY FRIEND!

AN OVERINFLATED SENSE OF JUSTICE?

I LIKE MY SENSE OF JUSTICE TO MATCH MY EGO.

...HMM.

DO YOU HAVE A PICTURE OF THE KIDDUSH-CUP PLATE?

IS THAT AN ENGRAVING?

OOOH, LOOK AT YOU, SHERLOCK.

C. METZENBAUM?

HUH.

WHAT?

I *KNOW* SOME METZENBAUMS.

THIS IS MY LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER. I DIDN'T KNOW THERE'D BE A ***PURIM SPIEL*** PRACTICE HAPPENING, SORRY!

THIS LOOKS RIGHT UP MY ALLEY. BUT WHAT IS HAPPENING, EXACTLY?

PURIM'S A HOLIDAY CELEBRATING WHEN THIS BADASS QUEEN, ESTHER, PLAYED TWELVE-DIMENSIONAL CHESS AGAINST SOME ANTI-SEMITES AND SAVED THE JEWISH PEOPLE.

WE DO A PLAY EVERY YEAR TO TELL THE STORY, AND EVERYONE GETS DRESSED UP IN COSTUMES. IT'S ACTUALLY CONSIDERED GOOD TO GET SMASHED.

HOW COME I'M JEWISH AND I'VE NEVER HEARD OF THIS? I ONLY GOT DRAGGED TO YOM KIPPUR. THAT WAS ***NOT*** AS MUCH FUN.

RABBI, I--

ASHER! FANTASTIC! I NEED SOMEONE TO BE THE UNDERSTUDY FOR MORDECHAI. WILL YOU?

SURE! BUT FIRST, I NEED YOUR HELP. WE'RE LOOKING FOR THE METZENBAUMS.

ETHAN METZENBAUM IS RIGHT OVER THERE. WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

HE'S A METZENBAUM? BUT THAT'S THE KID WHO SMASHED THE KAVINSKY'S WINDOW!

AND HE'S MAKING FOR THE DOOR!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON HERE--

EXIT

--BUT HE'S NOT GETTING AWAY THIS TIME!

AH!

STOP RIGHT THERE, KID.

WHERE'S THAT KIDDUSH CUP YOU STOLE?

ETHAN! IS THIS TRUE?

UMMM-- Y-YES?

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!

GIVE IT BACK.

NOT A CHANCE.

ETHAN, IF IT'S NOT YOURS--

BUT IT *IS* MINE!

IT'S MY *GRANDMOTHER'S* KIDDUSH-CUP SET. SHE GOT IT FOR HER WEDDING. IT'S HER MOST IMPORTANT BELONGING.

THEN HOW DID IT END UP IN A PAWN-SHOP?

EXIT

I...I GOT IN TROUBLE FOR VANDALIZING SCHOOL PROPERTY. I HAD TO PAY FOR THE DAMAGES, BUT I DIDN'T HAVE THE MONEY. MY FAMILY DIDN'T EITHER.

MY GRANDMA PAWNED THE KIDDUSH-CUP SET SO SHE COULD PAY MY FINES. SHE DIDN'T WANT ME TO GET KICKED OUT OF SCHOOL.

THAT WAS NICE OF YOU TO TRY TO GET IT BACK FOR YOUR GRANDMA. BUT YOU STILL CAN'T *STEAL*. OR SMASH WINDOWS. THE KAVINSKYS ARE A NICE FAMILY.

I PROMISE I'LL GO BACK AND HELP THEM CLEAN UP!

SHAKE ON IT.

I GUESS I BETTER TAKE THE CUP BACK TOO...

NO, TAKE IT HOME TO YOUR GRANDMA. I'LL TALK TO THE KAVINSKYS. I THINK THEY'LL UNDERSTAND. WE CAN MAKE THIS RIGHT.

BUT THERE'S ONE MORE THING *I* NEED TO MAKE RIGHT.

I STOOD YOU UP. AND THEN I DRAGGED YOU ALONG TO SOLVE THIS MYSTERY WITH ME.

I'M JUST GLAD I COULD HELP.

I THINK WE NEED A DO-OVER DATE.

WICCAN & HULKLING IN "EVERYWHERE"

MONTANA, OFF THE BEATEN PATH.

HAVE GAS

BEER

IT DOESN'T LOOK *OPEN.*

BETTER BE. IT'S THE FIRST PLACE WE'VE SEEN FOR *MILES,* AND THIS CAR WANTS TO *EXPLODE.*

I'LL *FIXFIXFIX,* OR WE CAN *DITCH* THE CAR AND FLY THE REST OF THE WAY.

BABE, WE SAID GREAT AMERICAN *ROAD* TRIP. NO. POWERS. BE GROUNDED IN EVERY WAY.

I KNOW, BUT THIS FEELS LIKE A SECOND HONEYMOON CURSE.

HOW ABOUT WE KEEP TRYING HONEYMOONS UNTIL THEY'RE PERFECT?

I'M SO IN.

OH, I HAVE AN IDEA.

I LOVE IDEAS.

COME WITH ME TO THE PURIM SPIEL TOMORROW NIGHT. YOU'LL JUST NEED TO GET A COSTUME.

OH, I'D LOVE THAT. AND I HAVE THE PERFECT COSTUME IN MIND.

THE END.

SO, SHOULD WE BRO UP FOR WHATEVER HILLBILLY NONSENSE IS IN THERE?

GOOD BUDDY.

BRUH...

BEST PALS WALKING...

LAST HATE CRIME FOR THREE HUNDRED MILES.

ARE YOU--ACTUALLY ANXIOUS? REMEMBER, WE CAN FLATTEN THIS PLACE.

I KNOW, IT'S NOT LOGICAL, BUT I GUESS A CERTAIN--*UNSAFE?*--STILL FEELS UNSAFE. POLITICALLY UNSAFE. CHILDHOOD UNSAFE.

I GET THAT. IT'S WILD HOW IT STAYS WITH US.

YEAH.

HAAAAAAYYY, BOYS!

♫♫ THE KIND OF GIRL WHO THINKS I CANNNN...! ♫♫

Lacie Lorraine
CLEARLY TRANSGENDER COWGIRL-ISH MONTANA GAS-STATION ATTENDANT. (SHE/HER/HOWDY!)

UM, OUTER. OUTER SPACE.

COME ON NOW, MAYBE NEAR TARNAX?

YOU SPEAK SKRULL?

NAH, MOSTLY ONLY KNOW THE SWEARS. HOLD THAT HOSE THERE.

*TRANSLATES TO "IT'S BEAUTIFUL."

I KNEW SHE WASN'T SKRULL, BUT SHE IS FULL OF SURPRISES.

NOW, DON'T BE SAYING THAT TO A TRANS LADY. IT'S A STEREOTYPE.

HEH. NICE.

HA! WHEW?

IS THIS A MUNA SONG?!

IT IS! LOVE 'EM. SORRY, I TURN IT WAY UP WHEN I DON'T HAVE CUSTOMERS. CLUB CONVENIENCE!

YOU COULD HAVE KEPT IT LOUD. WE LOVE IT.

IT WAS NOT WHAT WE WERE EXPECTING IN THE BOONIES.

YOU ARE FROM HERE, RIGHT?! THE BOOTS. THE VIBE.

NO, MA'AM. WE'RE KIND OF OBSESSED WITH YOU.

I PICKED UP A FEW THINGS. LONG STORY, BUUUUT-- I'D LIKE YA TO GET TO CAMP BEFORE SUNDOWN.

YEAH, NO RUSH. TELL US THINGS.

I GOTTA WARN YA. A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO, I GOT DIAGNOSED WITH ADHD--YA KNOW ANYONE WITH THAT?

MAYBE. I KNOW A GUY WHO CONSTANTLY TALKS WHILE HE'S FIGHTING.

A FEW OF THEM.

WELL, I'M PRONE TO "INFODUMPIN." I DON'T KNOW WHERE I'M FROM, BUT IN MY EARLIEST MEMORIES, I KNEW I WAS TRANS, WHICH SHAPED WHERE I WAS GOIN'. WE DIDN'T CALL IT TRANS THEN--TWO THOUSAND SOMETHIN' YEARS AGO.

WHAT?!

NO DISTRACTIONS NOW.

I'VE HEARD THAT BEFORE. BOTH WAYS. WHAT CAN I DO YA FOR?

RIGHT. WE HAVE THIS CAR, AND IT'S-- SAD? SMELLS AND IT'S SMOKING.

LET'S TAKE A GANDER.

I'M LACIE, BY THE WAY. YOU'RE HEADIN' TO GLACIER PARK, YEAH? WHERE ARE YOU CUTIES FROM?

I'M BILLY-- ORIGINALLY FROM NEW YORK.

OH! I DID PRIDE THERE IN '96, '97.

I'M TEDDY. I'M FROM-- SPACE.

FIGURED. AROUND WHAT PARTS?

ANCIENT GREECE.

"WE WERE CALLED GALLAE.

THEY INSIST WE ARE OF THE SUN OR OF THE MOON, BUT ARE NOT DAWN AND DUSK THE MOST BEAUTIFUL?

"WE WERE *HEALERS.*

I BILED THE WOUND AND GIFTED WILLOW, PRIESTESS.

GOOD, AND YOU? HAS EATING THE ROOTS NOT BEEN SOFTENING YOUR ESSENCE, LACIUS?

→SIGH← PERHAPS MORE MILK THISTLE?

YES, UNTIL YOUR DAY OF BLOOD, MY SISTER.

"WE WERE *MUSES.*

YOUR REVELATIONS!

"THERE'S A COUPLE MARBLE CARVINGS OF ME SOMEWHERES.)

"AND *COMPANIONS.*

YOU TWO--THE EXARCH HAS REQUESTED TENDING.

LACIUS, STAY. IT IS YOUR DAY TO CUT AWAY WHAT OFFENDS YOU.

MY PRIESTESS, I'VE TRIED AT FESTIVAL. IT FAILS.

YOU ARE NOT ALONE IN THIS.

SISTERS, GREAT MOTHER, AND MACHAON, REPAIR APOLLO'S DRUNKENNESS TOWARD OUR FAIR INITIATE LACIUS.

DOWNWARD TO SETTLED AIR. WINE, POPPY, AND PEPPER, WITH BLADE AND FIRE, IT *WILL* BE DONE.

"ON THAT DAY, I LEARNED I WAS *INDESTRUCTIBLE.*

ANCIENT MOROCCO.

"UNSATISFIED GIRLS LIKE US SEARCHED FOR MAGICS ACROSS THE SEA.

SISTERS, OUR SHARED DREAM HELPED ME BECOME TAFRARA SORCERER SUPREME.

I WILL CRAFT YOU AS I HAVE MYSELF.

PERHAPS MORE FELINE?

NO CAT STUFF FOR ME.

BY THE AGELESS VISHANTI, REVERSE THESE SOULS. CLAWED SPIRAL. EIHWAZ GROWTH.

MEOW!

...

NO!

HRRGH. I BESEECH ACROSS TEMPORAL... *UGH!*

I SEE A FUTILITY.

HALT THIS!

HER CELLS ARE IN STASIS. YOURS ARE FRAGILE, TAFRARA. STOP.

I'M SORRY.

VINLAND, 400 CE.

"MY TRANSITION WAS IN THE DUMPS UNTIL MY HOT TUT KREE, VIKING BOYFRIEND INTRODUCED ME TO HIS SKRULL EX. BITTER ENEMY SPECIES BUT BOTH OUTCASTS, SO HE MADE THE MISTAKE OF DATING HER INSTEAD OF KILLING HER.

I SEE YOU'RE STILL A FIERCE LEADER OF MEN, *HYN-BRGG.*

I HAVE A TALENT.

AND STILL DATING A [illegible]. YOU ALSO HAVE A TYPE.

IS THAT A SLUR?

IT TRANSLATES TO--"HEAVY MATERIAL TO BUILD WITH"?

DON'T SWEAT IT. IT'S A WORD I USE FOR MYSELF TOO.

WE DON'T SEEM MUCH ALIKE.

MAYBE NOT. BUT YOUR ABILITIES MAY BE THE KEY TO GETTING TECHNOLOGY TO HELP US BOTH.

GRAB YOUR CRAP.

OUTER-OUTER SPACE.

"I REMEMBER SPACE WAS GORG. EXCEPT THE BLOODY BATTLEFIELDS. AND P'ALLUC WAS A *MEAN GIRL.*

"BUT SHE HAD A PLAN."

I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU.

→SIGH← I'LL SAY IT SLOWER. WE STEAL A WEAPON THAT WILL CHANGE THE TIDES OF THIS ENDLESS WAR.

YAY, SKRULLS WIN!

AND GIVE IT TO THE SIDE THAT BUILDS US THE MOST POTENT SHAPE-SHIFTING TECH.

POOR, POOR SKRULLS.

GOOD FOR ME, SURE, BUT K'APEE SAID *YOU* CAN ALREADY CHANGE. FOR SKRULLS, SHAPE IS MEANINGLESS.

"MEANINGLESS." WHAT WE TELL OUTSIDERS TO FEEL SUPERIOR. THE MOST UNSHACKLED BEINGS. IN OUR YEARS OF SEARCHING, HAVE I SHIFTED?

OH. YOU CAN'T. I'M SORRY FOR...

I *CAN.*

I DID. ONCE.

I DON'T NOW.

THAT IT IS MEANINGLESS IS WHAT THE UNEXAMINED SAY. NEVER QUESTIONING THEIR DEFAULT FORM.

WHY WOULD THEY? YOU *NEVER* HAVE TO BE IT.

UNTIL *DEATH.*

I'LL REVERT TO A SEX I BARELY REMEMBER. TO MY PEOPLE, WHO I WAS AND HOW I LIVED MY ENTIRE LIFE--*THAT* BECOMES THE MEANINGLESS THING.

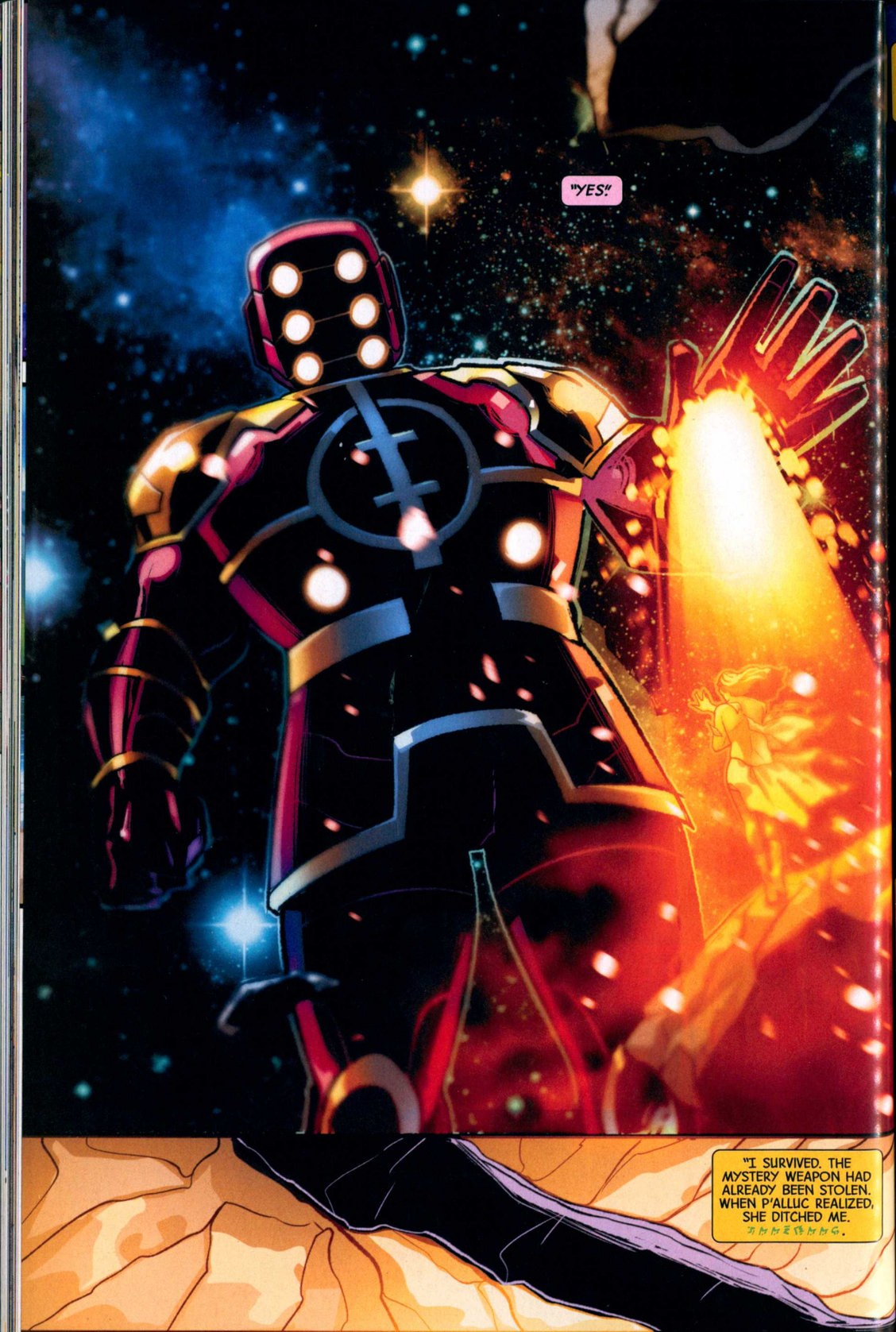
I *NEED* TO DIE FEMALE.

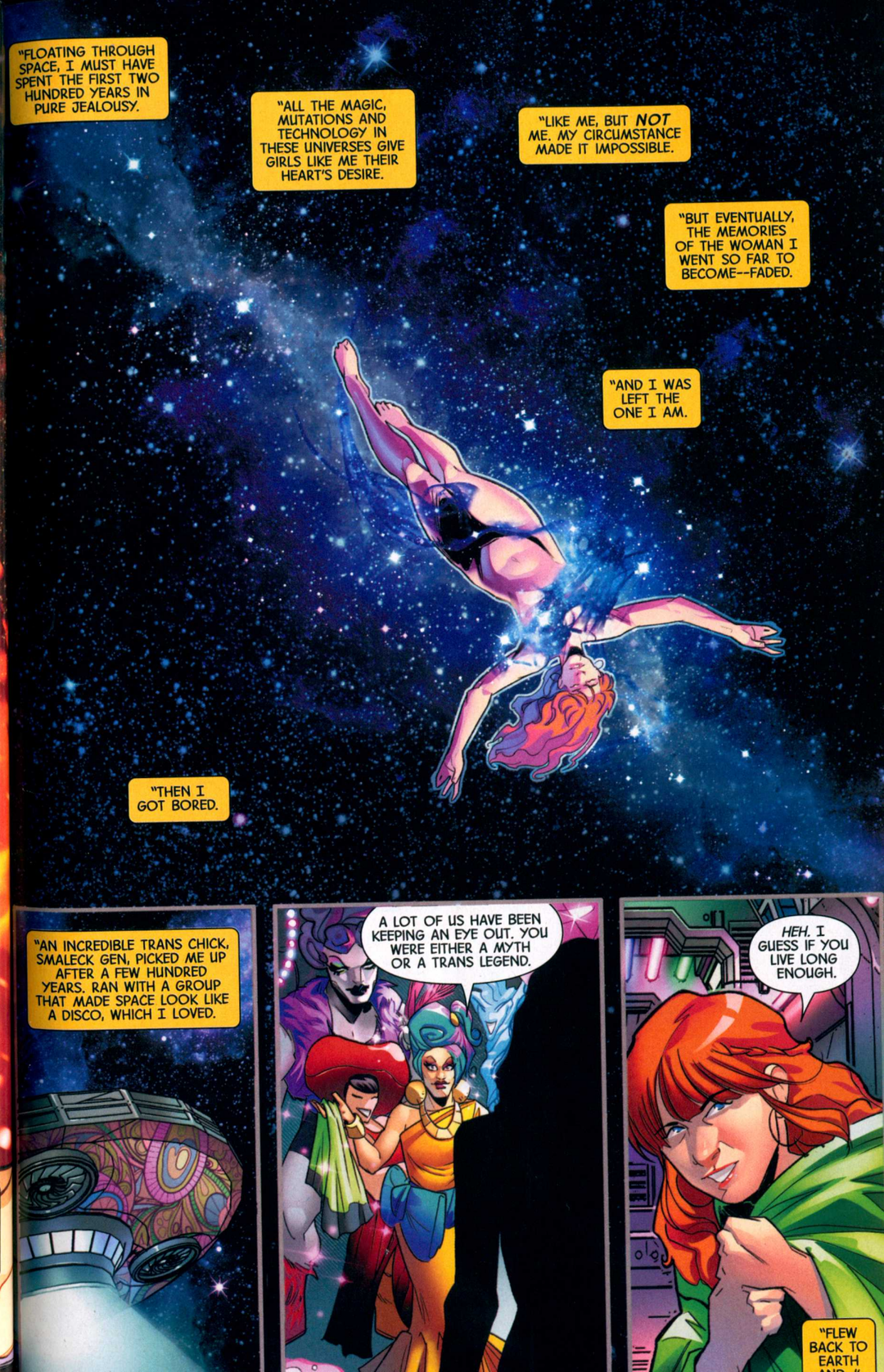
I UND--

SHUT UP.

WE'RE HERE. DO AS PLANNED. SURVIVE THE GUARD'S BLASTS. GRAB THE WEAPON. RETURN. IT PROBABLY WON'T SHOOT US IF WE HAVE THE WEAPON.

AND ONLY *ONE* GUARD, RIGHT?


"YES!"
"I SURVIVED. THE MYSTERY WEAPON HAD ALREADY BEEN STOLEN. WHEN P'ALLUC REALIZED, SHE DITCHED ME.
JMMZSMMG.


"FLOATING THROUGH SPACE, I MUST HAVE SPENT THE FIRST TWO HUNDRED YEARS IN PURE JEALOUSY.
"ALL THE MAGIC, MUTATIONS AND TECHNOLOGY IN THESE UNIVERSES GIVE GIRLS LIKE ME THEIR HEART'S DESIRE.
"LIKE ME, BUT NOT ME. MY CIRCUMSTANCE MADE IT IMPOSSIBLE.
"BUT EVENTUALLY, THE MEMORIES OF THE WOMAN I WENT SO FAR TO BECOME--FADED.
"AND I WAS LEFT THE ONE I AM.
"THEN I GOT BORED.
"AN INCREDIBLE TRANS CHICK, SMALECK GEN, PICKED ME UP AFTER A FEW HUNDRED YEARS. RAN WITH A GROUP THAT MADE SPACE LOOK LIKE A DISCO, WHICH I LOVED.
A LOT OF US HAVE BEEN KEEPING AN EYE OUT. YOU WERE EITHER A MYTH OR A TRANS LEGEND.
HEH. I GUESS IF YOU LIVE LONG ENOUGH.
"FLEW BACK TO EARTH

VALVE STEMS! YOUR SEALS ARE LEAKIN' OIL. MAKIN' SMOKE. NEW ONES WILL BE ABOUT A WEEK, AND...

I'M USING POWERS, HUSBAND.

EH, WE TRIED.

OHH, POWERS. I'LL GUIDE YA.

I DON'T ACTUALLY...

ALL THESE LITTLE SEALS. SOFTER AND SQUISHY.

HEH. OKAY, TEACH ME OF THE VALVE STEMS. THIS?

SQUISHIER. EVEN SQUISH YUP. WHOA

STORY OVER? FULLY CAR FIXING NOW?

ADHD--NOW FOCUS! MIRACLES ARE HAPPENING. HOP IN AND FIRE IT UP.

REEEVVVVV

THAT'S IT! HECK! WE BEAT THE LEAKS!

GET ALONG NOW. I CAN'T LET YOU MISS A GLACIER SUNSET FROM THIS SWEET RIG.

THANK YOU, LACIE.

IT WAS SO NICE TO MEET YOU.

YUP!

CATCH YA DOWN THE ROAD! KEEP IT BETWEEN THE DITCHES!

KISS

THE END.

BLACK CAT IN "BE GAY, DO CRIME"

BE HONEST WITH ME, CHÈRE--

I ♥ MY TRANS SON

THIS STORY TAKES PLACE BEFORE THE EVENTS OF AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #11! --S.B.

GAMBIT, I RESENT THE IMPLICATION THAT I'VE EVER BEEN ANYTHING LESS THAN HONEST WITH ANYONE. EVER.

...RIGHT. SOOO, WHAT REALLY BRINGS FELICIA HARDY ALL THE WAY TO THE CRESCENT CITY?

WAIT, ISN'T NEW ORLEANS SUPPOSED TO BE "THE BIG EASY"?

'F YOU'RE A TOURIST, MAYBE.

YOWCH. OKAY, FAIR. BUT IT'S DEFINITELY EASIER HERE THAN IN NEW YORK. AT LEAST NONE OF MY EXES LIVE HERE...

AHA. THERE SHE IS.

THERE WHO IS?
HEARTBREAK.
SWIPE
PLEASE. MY HEART'S MADE OF ADAMANTIUM.
OH?
WAIT, CRAP, NOT REALLY.
THAT WAS A *METAPHOR.* PLEASE DON'T GO AROUND TELLING PEOPLE I'M--
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEANT.
BUT REALLY, I'M NOT HEARTBROKEN. WHY WOULD I BE?
WELL, THERE'S--
WHAT, THE THING WITH *ODESSA DRAKE?*
I WAS THINKIN' OF SP--
BECAUSE THAT *WASN'T* A BIG DEAL.
I DON'T EVEN LIKE THE NEW YORK THIEVES GUILD.
"ODESSA KNEW WHAT SHE WAS GETTING INTO. SHE KNEW THERE WAS NEVER A FUTURE BETWEEN US.
"IT WAS ONE NIGHT. A *CELEBRATION.*
"...AND MAYBE A FEW OTHER CELEBRATIONS AFTER THAT."
WHEN I SAY "RIGID," YOU SAY "CONFORMITY!"
RIGID!
CONFORMITY!
RIGID!
CONFORMITY!
RADICAL!
RIGHT, BUT HOW 'BOUT SPIDER-M--?
ON YOUR RIGHT.
HMPH. GOOD CATCH.
JUST GIVE 'EM A LITTLE ONE.
MMM-HM.
FELICIA. *MA CHÈRE.*
YES, DEAR?
IT'S ME. YOU CAN TALK TO ME.
I'VE *BEEN* TALKING.
OKAY, BUT HOW 'BOUT YOU AND *SPIDER-MAN?*
WHO? I DIDN'T QUITE CATCH THAT--DID YOU SAY "*SPODER GLAND*"? BECAUSE *MINE'S* DOING JUST *FINE,* AND--
YOU'RE TOUGHER 'N SHOE LEATHER.
TOSS
FZZT
PEW
RIGID--
HEY!
SORRY. IT'S JUST THAT THERE'S NOTHING TO SAY ABOUT HIM! THE TWO OF US ARE...
ARE...?
NOTHING. WE'RE NOTHING.
I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WERE GONNA SHOW ME HOW *FUN* THIS CITY IS?
AIN'TCHA HAVING A GOOD TIME?
WELL, *SURE.* BUT NOTHING THAT'S MADE ME WANT TO STAY.
TO *STAY?* YOU DIDN'T MENTION YOU WERE CONSIDERING RELOCATION!
DIDN'T I?
IF YOU COME ON DOWN HERE FOR GOOD, MIGHT COULD BE YOU'D SEE FIT... TO JOIN THE *GUILD?*
THE *THIEVES GUILD?* WHY, I PLUMB FORGOT THERE WAS A NEW ORLEANS BRANCH.
C'MON, I'LL SHOW YOU OUR HEADQUARTERS! BUT, FELICIA--
MM?
HANDS T' YOURSELF. I MEAN IT.
AS IF YOU EVEN HAVE TO ASK.

Y'KNOW I USED TO BE KING OF THIS JOINT? 'COURSE, THAT WAS BEFORE THE BIG REMODEL.

"USED TO"? WHAT HAPPENED?

OH, THAT'S A YARN TOO LONG TO SPIN JUST NOW.

IT WAS ME WHO SAID WE OUGHTA HAVE BOTTLE SERVICE.

I LOVE THE WAY YOU THINK.

THAT'S THE LIBRARY--REFERENCE TEXTS AND STORAGE. I'VE GOT SCOTT SUMMERS' DIARY IN THERE.

DRIER 'N SALTINES.

IS IT JUICY?

UGH, OF COURSE.

AND THIS HERE'S THE *VAULT*. I CALLED AHEAD TO HAVE 'EM ADD A FEW EXTRA LAYERS OF PROTECTION, ON ACCOUNT 'A *YOU* BEIN' IN THE BUILDING.

YOU KNOW, NOBODY EVER TALKS ABOUT HOW *SWEET* YOU ARE?

AND THIS *HERE'S* THE PRIDE N' JOY OF THE GUILD.

IS THAT...?

CANDRA. THE GODDESS OF THIEVES HERSELF, CAST IN MYSTERIUM WE LIFTED OFF EDEN RIXLO. HE STILL DOESN'T KNOW WE'RE THE ONES WHO TOOK IT.

THAT'S S'POSED TO BE THE WATER OF ETERNAL LIFE FLOWIN' FROM HER TO US.

WOW. JUST...*WOW.* THANK YOU FOR SHOWING ME THIS.

HE--MMF!

DUNK!

LOVE YOU! GOTTA GO!

CHÈRE, DON'T YOU *DARE*--

SORRY! NO TIME TO CHAT!

I'VE GOTTA SEE A GIRL ABOUT A...

...JEWEL.

FELICIA HARDY.

I PREFER **BLACK CAT**, IF YOU DON'T MIND.

HOLY CRAP. IT REALLY WORKED.

I KNOW YOUR KIND. SELFISH. **PREDICTABLE.** YOU ALWAYS WANT THE SAME THINGS.

WHAT WILL IT BE, THEN?

RICHES BEYOND THE WILDEST LIMITS OF YOUR TINY, FRAGILE IMAGINATION?

I CAN GET THOSE ANY OL' TIME.

ETERNAL LIFE?

EUGH, BEEN THERE. NO THANKS.

YOUR ***LOVED ONES***, RETURNED FROM BEYOND THE VEIL?

I THINK WE STILL NEED A LITTLE SPACE, TO BE HONEST.

YOU SEEM SURPRISED. DID YOU THINK YOU WOULDN'T FIND ME?

I MEAN, EVERYONE'S BEEN SAYING YOU'RE ***DEAD***. BUT I FIGURED, WHO STAYS DEAD THESE DAYS?

HM. "DEAD" IS A FUNNY WORD.

YOUR MUTANT FRIENDS THOUGHT THEY COULD TRAP ME IN A MAGICAL GATEWAY.* A PATHETIC EFFORT--SUCH TOYS WILL ALWAYS CRUMBLE. I WILL ALWAYS RETURN.

IT HAPPENED IN *EXCALIBUR* (2019) #12! --S.B.

TELL ME, ***LITTLE CAT***--WHY HAVE YOU COME TO ME? WHAT IS IT YOU SEEK?

WELL...

THEN IT CAN ONLY BE ONE THING, AND MY ANSWER IS ***NO.***

WHAT?!

...

YOU'VE COME TO TRY TO GET ME TO TAKE THE NEW YORK THIEVES GUILD BACK INTO MY GOOD GRACES. I WILL NOT.

BAHAHAHAHA!

THAT'S **NOT** WHY I'M HERE. GOOD ONE THOUGH.

I...DO NOT OFTEN EXPERIENCE CONFUSION.

I'M NOT HERE FOR ANY OF THAT.

I'M HERE FOR **YOU.**

YES. FOR AN AUDIENCE WITH ME.

MM, NOT QUITE AN AUDIENCE. I WAS THINKING SOMETHING MORE LIKE...A ***DATE?***

WHAT?!

YOU KNOW. ME, YOU. DINNER AND... ***WHATEVER.***

BUT AREN'T YOU IN LOVE WITH SP--

JUST FOR FUN. NO STRINGS ATTACHED.

I DON'T SEE WHAT THIS WOULD GAIN YOU. I WOULDN'T GRANT ADDITIONAL FAVORS, ASIDE FROM MY COMPANY.

OH, I CAN THINK OF SOME ***FAVORS*** WE COULD GRANT ***EACH OTHER.***

BUT NO PRESSURE. REALLY. THE COMPANY OF A BEAUTIFUL GODDESS WHO LOVES THEFT IS ALL I ASK.

WHATEVER YOU'RE INTO, I ***PROMISE*** I'M GOOD AT IT.

SO? WHAT DO YOU SAY?

...

NYC. ONE WEEK LATER.

SO? WHAT DID SHE SAY?

FOR A GUY WITH EIGHT LEGS, YOU'VE SURE GOT NO MANNERS.

FOR THE LAST TIME, THE SPIDER DIDN'T GIVE ME INVISIBLE-LEG POWERS. I ALWAYS JUST HAVE TWO.

THAT MUST BE EMBARRASSING FOR YOU.

EITHER WAY, HOW COULD I POSSIBLY ANSWER YOUR QUESTION?

Knights of X #4, art by Bob Quinn & Erick Arciniega

THE MAKINGS OF "RETSY"

SPOTLIGHT: ELIZABETH "BETSY" BRADDOCK AND RACHEL "RAY" ANNE SUMMERS WITH WRITER TINI HOWARD

BY ANGÉLIQUE ROCHÉ

EDITED FOR BREVITY

The lives of Marvel's mutant characters are filled with battles, near-death experiences, time jumps, dimension jumps, and, of course, the constant reality of existing in a world where public sentiment toward mutantkind shifts like the tide. But beneath the chaos are simple stories of self-discovery, finding identity, belonging, and the not-so-rare instances of finding love. The newly minted relationship between Elizabeth "Betsy" Braddock and Rachel "Ray" Anne Summers—affectionately known as "Retsy"—is one of the latest examples of love and understanding finding a way amid the chaos of saving the world or, in the case of Betsy Braddock, the Omniverse. But who are Betsy Braddock and Rachel Summers?

Excalibur (2019) #19, cover by Mahmud Asrar & Matthew Wilson

Elizabeth "Betsy" Braddock - [Earth-616]
Alias: Previously known as Psylocke. Currently Captain Britain, Defender of Otherworld.
Family: Her twin brother, Brian Braddock. Older brother, Jamie Braddock. Faire-in-law, Meggan Braddock (Brian's wife), and her halfling niece, Maggie.
Created by: Chris Claremont and Herb Trimpe.
First Appearance: *Captain Britain #8* (1976).
Powers: Martial arts, telekinesis, and telepathy (including the power to create illusions).
Affiliations: S.T.R.I.K.E. Psi Division, X-Men, Excalibur, Exiles, and X-Force.
What you need to know: Mutant, supermodel, pilot, ninja, sister, and, from 1986-2018, a consciousness-swapped ninja trapped inside the body of the Japanese assassin Kwannon. Now returned to her own body, Betsy has the mantle of Captain Britain, albeit not without Britain's reluctance.

Excalibur (1988) #1, cover by Alan Davis & Paul Neary

Rachel "Ray" Anne Summer - [Earth-811]
Alias: Askani.
Family: Parents, Scott Summers and Jean Grey-Summers (Phoenix).
Created by: Chris Claremont, John Byrne, and John Romita Jr.
First Appearance: *X-Men #141* (1980).
Powers: Telepathy and telekinesis amplified by the Phoenix Force, dimensional travel, and chrono-skimming
Affiliations: X-Men, New Mutants, X-Factor, and Excalibur.
What you need to know: As a child, Rachel was captured by the government, brainwashed, and trained as a mutant "hound" to track and capture other mutants. She broke free of her brainwashing, joining the X-Men. While attempting to change the past using the astral plane, she's given the ability to physically travel back, eventually landing in the mainstream reality, Earth-616, and enrolling at Charles Xavier's School for Gifted Youngsters. While a member of Excalibur, she became close friends with Betsy's brother Brian. Now she is known as Askani, guardian of the timeline.

Betsy Braddock and Rachel Summers are now appearing in the brand-new series *Betsy Braddock: Captain Britain (2023)* written by veteran writer Tini Howard with artist Vasco Georgiev. Howard has been working in comics for almost ten years, writing books for *Rick and Morty*, *Power Rangers*, and various other properties. She has written multiple series for Marvel, including *Excalibur* (2019), *X of Swords* (2021), and *Knights of X* (2022). She also wrote a story featuring queer icons Destiny and Mystique in *Marvel's Voices: Pride* (2022).

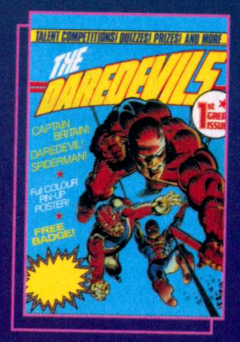
I had a chance to chat with Howard about her current series, *Betsy Braddock: Captain Britain*, writing Betsy's new chapter, building a foundation for Retsy, and the power of diverse queer stories.

Betsy Braddock: Captain Britain #1, cover by Erica D'Urso & Matthew Wilson

Picking up where *Knights of X* ended, *Betsy Braddock: Captain Britain* finds Retsy establishing their lives on Braddock Isle, pushing back against media dissent, and balancing Betsy's multidimensional obligations. **But how do two mutants created over four decades ago find themselves in each other's arms?** According to Howard, it all started when she was asked to join the Krakoa writers' room.

"We were all asked to present some ideas for what kind of book we'd wanna write. I was really interested in developing a story blending ritual and magic." She subsequently did that in multiple series, including *Excalibur* (2019), *X of Swords* (2021), and *Knights of X* (2022). There was another looming question: What was next for mutant Betsy Braddock, now back in her original body? What's her role? "And then I remember some of us saying at the same time, 'Betsy's Captain Britain.'"

But who is Captain Britain? *I thought you'd never ask.* Originally deriving powers from a mystical amulet gifted by Merlyn, Captain Britain, Dr. Brian Braddock, PhD, was initially tasked with protecting Great Britain and its territories. In the Marvel UK series, *The Daredevils* (1983)—a collection that included a reprinting of Frank Marvel's *Daredevil* and new stories like Captain Britain—the hero took on the role of Champion of the Omniverse and protector of Otherworld, A.K.A. the place where all of the Multiverses touch. While this seems to be a pretty big job for one hero, there is a Captain Britain from every universe. Together, they form what is called the Captain Britain Corps, including humans, humanoids, and dinosaurs alike. These heroes often work with or fight against notable figures from British mythology like Merlyn, King Arthur, or Morgan Le Fay.



Daredevils #1, cover by **Paul Neary**

One of the first things Betsy must deal with is the complexities of adjusting to life outside of Kwannon's body. "We [the writers and editors] started exploring the question of Betsy's place now that she is back in her own body. The story that follows through the subsequent series centers around her taking on the role of Captain Britain and learning to accept it within herself." In finding herself, she also grows closer to another classic Excalibur character, Rachel Summers. Rachel, a mutant with a complex multi-timeline, multidimensional background herself, is also finding her place in the ever-evolving mutant ecosystem.

Rachel and Betsy's connection was almost natural, considering that Rachel once fought alongside Brian Braddock as a member of Excalibur. At first, Rachel primarily appeared in Leah Williams' *X-Factor* (2020), periodically appearing in Howard's *Excalibur*. Slowly, their relationship blossomed. Howard laid out the timeline and how the characters' stories intertwined. "Once *X-Factor* ended, Rachel appeared in *Excalibur* more and more. She found her role as Askani in *Knights of X*, and that's also when Betsy and Rachel realized they had feelings for each other and kissed for the first time." Now Betsy is back in England with Rachel and the rest of the Braddock family at Braddock Manor, battling her old foe Morgan Le Fay for the soul of England.

I asked Howard about the literal complexities of creating a natural narrative that requires coordinating multiple storylines and writers and why coordination and intention are important. "The mutant metaphor has always been really loud for queer people. And it's important to have different kinds of textual queer experiences. Not just in a tragic, miserable experience. It feels good not to ignore the way queerness informs the actions of queer people in nonsexual ways." And as for coordination and intentions, "Sometimes you don't know how long or short the books will be, and writers often write things they aren't sure will pay off. Or may pay off in another way. I've been writing Rachel and Betsy falling in love before I knew I could. I couldn't help it. Then, once I knew I could, it was about balance. I love a slow-burn romance, but I also wanted the time to appreciate the characters together, not just have them kiss on the last page of the last issue."

Betsy Braddock: Captain Britain #1, art by **Vasco Georgiev & Erick Arciniega**

While both Tini and I didn't want to spoil what the future holds for Betsy and Rachel, I was curious about how she described the two mutants as a couple. "Imagine if the knight was the fem, girly, and prissy one and the mage was like the butch one with a dog. Rachel is essentially a monk fire-entity mage, and Betsy, in all of her prim, proper, and fem glory, loves Rachel, her dog, and her collection of stinky old T-shirts."

Catch up with Betsy, Rachel, and your other favorite mutants in *Excalibur* (2019), *X of Swords* (2021) and *Knights of X* (2022) on Marvel Unlimited and the latest issue of *Betsy Braddock: Captain Britain* (2023) wherever you get your comics!

MUZZLE IN
"NO TRESPASSING; BEWARE OF DOG"
STARK UNLIMITED PHARMACEUTICALS
Midnight.
COME ON, HURRY UP!
OH, WHAT THE #$%&!
PEACH.
Leader of the Commune.
Trans woman. Hacker.
Yorkie enthusiast.
Currently really frustrated.
IS THIS IT? REALLY?
THEY MUST'VE JUST HAD A SHIPMENT GO OUT. BUT THERE'S STILL PLENTY OF NEEDLES AND SYRINGES...
...PLUS BANDAGES, SOME ANTISEPTIC--
FINE. IT IS WHAT IT IS. LET'S JUST GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE THE SECURITY SYSTEM'S BACK ONLINE. I CAN ONLY KEEP US HIDDEN FOR SO LONG.

THIS IS SUCH CRAP.

I KNOW IT ISN'T WHAT WE WANTED. BUT IT'S NOT NOTHING.

IT MIGHT AS WELL BE, COMPARED TO WHAT WE EXPECTED. I JUST THOUGHT--

YORKIE.
A Yorkie. Loyal. Protective. Peach enthusiast. Currently also frustrated.

CRASH

WHAT THE HELL WAS THAT?

NOTHING GOOD.

THE COMMUNE.
A Robin-Hood-esque, queer, human, anarchist crew who live and work together.

YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME!

YAP YAP YAP

CRASH

HIYA! WHATCHA GOT THERE?

BACK OFF, SPIDEY! WE AREN'T HURTING ANYONE, AND WE DON'T WANNA START WITH YOU.

COME OOOON. TRESPASSING AND THEFT ARE EASY-PEASY, BUT YOU CAN'T HANDLE A FRIENDLY CONVERSATION?

YOU HEARD HER. STAY OUT OF OUR WAY!

BEFORE YOU GET BIT!

GRR GRR GRR

THAT'S A JOKE, RIGHT? NO OFFENSE, BUT I THINK I CAN HANDLE THE LITTLE ANKLE BITER HERE.

YAP YAP YAP

NO ONE'S TALKING ABOUT HIM. MUZZLE?

MUZZLE? OKAY, HELP ME OUT. WHAT AM I MISSING?

ME.

MUZZLE.

WHAT--?

SLLRP

THUMP

LET'S MOVE, PEOPLE! GRAB WHAT YOU CAN!

NOW JUST HOLD ON A--

CHOMP

BZZT

AHHH!!

WHAT WAS THAT FOR?!

PEACH TRIED TO WARN YOU.

I'VE BEEN CALLED WORSE. YOU SHOULD REALLY RUN ALONG NOW, ITSY-BITSY, BEFORE SOMEONE GETS HURT.

I THOUGHT PEACH WAS TALKING ABOUT HER LAP-DOG!

YOU CAN'T JUST TAKE THINGS THAT DON'T BELONG TO YOU.

THWIP

RIIP

WRONG AGAIN.

SLURP

RAARGH

OH, COME ON!

YOU GOTTA BE JOKING.

I'M NOT A VERY FUNNY GUY.

WHAM

AWW, DON'T SAY THAT! C'MON, GIMME YOUR BEST *PUNCH LINE.*

WAIT--DID YOU ABSORB MY WEBBING *AND* THE ELECTRIC CHARGE FROM MY WEB-SHOOTERS?!

BZZT

CRACK

BZZT

WELL--IS IT JUST ME, OR IS THERE A *SPARK* BETWEEN US?

RAARGH

YOU'RE RIGHT. YOUR SENSE OF HUMOR IS *AWFUL.*

I TRIED TO WARN YOU.

WHAT'D YOU EVEN COME HERE FOR? SOME TOP-SECRET NEW COMPOUND OR SOMETHING? LET ME GUESS--YOU WERE GONNA MAKE A BIO-WEAPON, WEREN'T YOU?

...

HORMONES WERE AT THE TOP OF OUR LIST. THE WAIT TIMES FOR TRANS HEALTH CARE IN THIS CITY ARE BRUTAL.

WHAT?

INSULIN WAS NEXT--THEN WHATEVER WE COULD GRAB.

MAYBE I'M JUST *HUNG UP* ON IT, BUT I'M NOT SURE I BELIEVE YOU.

HEY, I DON'T *NOT* BELIEVE YOU! STICK AROUND A SECOND--WHERE ARE YOU FROM, KID?

NOW, THAT'S MY LEAST FAVORITE STORY...

OH, YOU'RE BACK. HAVE A CHANGE OF HEART AND DECIDE TO LET ME DOWN AND TURN YOURSELF IN?

...

⇶SIGH⇷ LOOK, IF YOU'RE REALLY SOME WELL-MEANING VIGILANTE, THE LEAST YOU COULD DO IS TELL ME HOW LONG I'M GONNA BE STUCK LIKE THIS.

NOT LONG. THE EXCHANGE WEARS OFF AFTER A FEW MINUTES, AND THE WEBBING WILL DISINTEGRATE... I CAN DO A LITTLE MORE THAN THAT THOUGH.

HACKETT FAMILY HOME, SEMINOLE COUNTY, OKLAHOMA.

IS THIS ABOUT THE FATHER?

YOU DON'T GET IT, MA--THERE'S NO *FATHER*. I WAS A GUINEA PIG TO THAT MAN. AND HIS *EXPERIMENT* IS STILL INSIDE ME.

OH, ELAINE...

OH, GROSS, WHAT--?

SLURP

A FEW MONTHS LATER.

SHE'S NOT COMING BACK. SHE DOESN'T WANT ANYTHING TO DO WITH THIS. AND I CAN'T BLAME HER FOR BEING *SCARED*.

LOOK AT IT, DORY. IT'S NOT EVEN HUMAN.

THERE'S NOTHING SCARY ABOUT A *BABY*, GROVER.

DOESN'T MATTER. I WON'T ABANDON MY GRANDCHILD.

NOT THAT LONG AGO.

DORY, I KNOW YOU LOVE HER. I LOVE HER TOO. BUT SOMETIMES LOVING SOMEONE AIN'T ENOUGH.

AND WHERE IS THAT? WHERE EXACTLY DO YOU THINK SHE BELONGS?

NO ONE UNDERSTANDS HER, IS ALL. SHE JUST NEEDS TO *FIND* HER PLACE.

...I DON'T KNOW.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR DANIEL

BY ANGÉLIQUE ROCHÉ

EDITED FOR BREVITY

As *Marvel's Voices* continues to shed light on BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ creatives through both the podcast and anthologies, we also love to shed light on the different ways creatives impact storytelling here at Marvel. I had a chance to ask one of those creatives, former *Marvel's Voices* podcast producer MR Daniel, about their career and role here at Marvel. A Boston native, MR has been working in podcasting for almost a decade. MR is currently the Manager of Audio Story Content, working on both audio-fiction podcasts and Marvel's web-based virtual comic line, Infinity Comics. They are also a guest editor on a story in this year's *Marvel's Voices: Pride* anthology.

MR has an extensive background in sound art and cultural and gender studies from their previous life as an academic. Before working in podcasting and now virtual comics, MR used their interdisciplinary experience in academia as a sound artist, a writer, a researcher, and even in business development. MR joined the Marvel team in 2021, working on both scripted and unscripted podcasts.

AR: Introduce yourself to folks just getting to know your work.

MR: Oh wow! Well, I would describe myself as a Black, multiethnic, queer, nonbinary, genderqueer person who was socialized as female, and someone who is deeply invested in storytelling. I love telling stories.

AR: How did you get introduced to Marvel?

MR: Visiting friends in the South End of Boston after church (and before gentrification) as a kid—there were discount comic books at the corner. The covers were gone, so they sold them on the cheap. I remember horror comics and comics about Vision and thinking that Vision was fascinating. Then we started going to a new church. That was the end of comics because I was basically sneaking them home. Long story short, my family was pretty religious, and I knew I had to hide the books (laughs).

When I got older, I got into *X-Men: The Animated Series*. Characters like Storm, Misty Knight, and Monica Rambeau were iconic. Not to mention, Misty and Monica were more like the Black women I knew. At that time, I identified as female for lack of any other option that fit my identity, so I was usually drawn to women characters. At the same time, I didn't know anyone like Luke Cage in real life (he and Black Panther were more like movie stars), but I did know Black men like Blue Marvel and Robbie Robertson. The way Marvel felt both rooted in the real world and the fantastical, with people who had real-world problems along with the epic adventures they participated in, was key to how it connected with me.

AR: What drew you to a career creating and supporting the creation of stories?

MR: I've always loved stories, books, movies, music, theater, and pretty much any medium. I made radio plays and comics when I was a kid and wrote songs as a teenager. So that's always been there. You have more options for asking and addressing real-life questions in fiction mediums than in nonfiction. You can also give more honest answers.

AR: You've got such a diverse background. How did you get into podcasting?

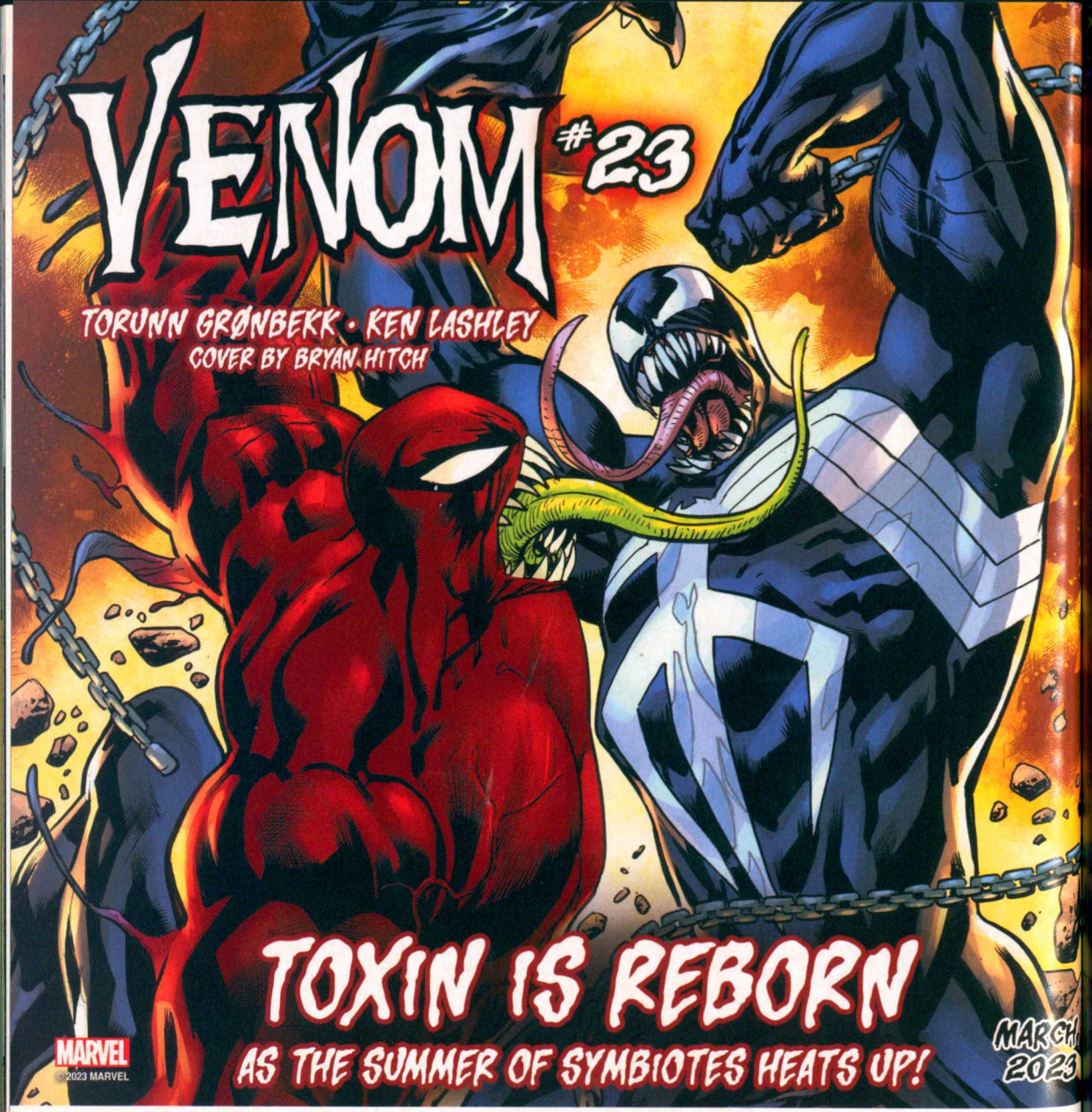
MR: I was working an administrative job at a university while I was studying sound and music in graduate school. While I was working that desk job, I would listen to podcasts and grew to really love the medium. I've always loved sound, any kind of sound. I love music but also sound design, Foley, ambient sound, and the richness of the human voice. Putting those elements together with storytelling was for me.

Before that, when I was finishing my doctoral dissertation—yes, I went to grad school twice. I don't recommend it (laughs)—I was also taking sound design and audio production classes to feed my brain and spirit.

AR: Tell me a little about your podcast journey.

MR: During my second grad-school experience, I regularly listened to podcasts created, produced, and hosted by Black women. While the shows were really informative and entertaining, the sound quality of a couple of the shows wasn't great. So I pulled their audio from the web, cleaned it up, and sent it to them with an offer to do audio production for them. They both said yes. That led me to work for an outlet and work at New York Comic-Con.

I also worked on a podcast about the stories of Black women comic-book characters, including characters at Marvel, DC, and indie comic-book publishers. My experience working remotely with people around the



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country and my research background helped me land an internship on Gimlet Media's *Uncivil*, a Civil War history podcast. The co-hosts were in different states, and they needed someone with research skills. Most importantly, there was a queer Black producer who advocated for and hired me. After *Uncivil*, I shifted to audio fiction. The format spoke to me creatively, and I got to work with some amazing talent. That gave me key experience reviewing and working on scripts, casting, sound editing, and with overall creative development.

AR: How has your role at Marvel expanded over the years?

MR: I started at Marvel as an associate producer working on interview and talk shows, like *Marvel's Voices* and *Marvel's Pull List*. That expanded to nonfiction narrative podcasts, like *Marvel's Declassified* and *The History of Marvel Comics: Black Panther*. At the same time, I began working on Marvel's fiction podcasts and was promoted to producer. Shortly thereafter, I began working exclusively on fiction podcasts, including the *Marvel's Wastelanders* series of shows and *Marvel's Squirrel Girl: The Unbeatable Radio Show!*

AR: What is your favorite thing about the job?

MR: Working with talent, getting to collaborate with people across creative mediums, and bringing new voices in to tell stories in the Marvel Universe are all really meaningful to me. Although I haven't had the opportunity to work on queer stories in the audio fiction space (YET), I've worked with a number of queer and BIPOC talent in both the audio fiction and comics mediums and have worked on queer stories in the comics space. It's really rewarding to do work that's informed by diverse voices and experiences, and I hope to do more of that in the future.

AR: For podcast newbies, what's the difference between fiction and nonfiction podcasts?

MR: Well, nonfiction podcasts have a range of formats, including talk like *Marvel's Pull List*, interviews like *Marvel's Voices*, and highly researched and scripted nonfiction narrative shows like *Marvel's Declassified*. Fiction podcasts are primarily scripted and performed by a cast of actors with a director and with the support of producers. Fiction shows also include music and sound design, and sound effects play a major role.

AR: What does that process for a fiction podcast look like?

MR: Oof, fiction podcasts are pretty involved. Preproduction includes development aspects like story pitching and working with the team to build a crew to support the size and needs of each unique production, including identifying and recruiting writing, directing, audio production, and sound-design talent. Once the team is in place and the scripts come together, drafts are reviewed by the producers and director with feedback and discussions with the writer. We also discuss any additional needs the show might require.

While the narrative arc is taking shape, casting begins. Once scripts are locked, we start recording sessions, which last several weeks. The audio-production team takes the recording sessions and creates initial cuts of episodes for the director and producers to review. Once they are approved, music and SFX are added before they are reviewed by the director and producers—AGAIN. It sounds dry—but it can be a really fascinating process.

AR: What kind of research and prep goes into bringing a show together?

MR: Reading comics! This is the part where I'm saying to myself, "OMG, I get to read comics for work!" Also, looking for talent who can write and direct for audio can be challenging because some people think writing for audio is basically "writing for TV or film but without the visuals." And it's definitely not that. Audio fiction is made more potent by a meaningful understanding of how sound works. For those who don't have that experience, it can be challenging to make the pivot to an audio-only medium.

AR: I've had some really interesting convos with you about sound and storytelling, and I always feel like I walk away smarter than I started. How would you describe "how sound works"?

MR: Hmm, a one-line "how sound works" answer is difficult. It's definitely a mixture of science and art—in a fun way! At its core, it's about understanding how the human brain experiences sound and what storytelling elements are and aren't available to you in a sound-only environment.

AR: What are you currently working on?

MR: Currently, I'm working on Marvel Infinity Comics and am a guest editor on this anthology. It has been really exciting to be editing a story by YA novelist H.E. Edgmon. The story introduces Muzzle, a trans-masc Indigenous symbiote-human hybrid, to the Marvel Universe. Seeing Lorenzo Susi bring H.E.'s vision to life has been so amazing.

Make sure to check out Marvel's Infinity Comics *on Marvel Unlimited, and be sure to listen to our fiction and nonfiction shows wherever you get your podcasts.*

Thank you so much for taking this on at the eleventh hour.

Northstar

Viv Vision

Northstar

America

You're a lifesaver, Jumbo!

That's ***three*** super heroes who need last-minute outfits. The Pride Fashion show is in less than ***twenty-four hours.*** What the cluck are you going to do?!

Darling, my last boss was ***Emma Frost.*** I know how to cope under pressure.

Begin the flow of caffeinated products!

If they can pull it off on *Drag Race* with a paltry two arms, it'll be a breeze to make these...

...JUMBO CARNATION'S ULTIMATE CREATIONS!!!

Send in the first super hero!

I can't believe I let you talk me into this, Bishop.

America, you've been moping about your ex ***Ramone*** like it's a full-time job.

We agreed you need to step out of your comfort zone.

You agreed. I was just in the vicinity at the time.

Any special requests, Ms. Chavez?

Can it be denim? Oh, and it's gotta have pockets. ***Non-negotiable.***

Pockets?! My sweet beloved, this is high couture! What could you possibly need pockets for?!

Where else is a lady supposed to keep her pocket bacon?

Ladies and chicken-men, the category is...

...Boricua Realness!

She's giving glamour, she's serving...pocket bacon?

Okay, you win, Bishop. I look awesome. Ramone who?

NEXT!

Sweetie, what's up? You seem a little distracted.

I'm sorry. This is all so last minute. I'm not even sure I should be taking part in this fashion show.

Why would you say that?

I've only ever dated *one* girl. I'm just starting to figure this all out. I don't know that I really *belong* at a Pride event.

Is it too late to back out?

Viv, my precious angel. Being queer isn't about notches on your bedpost.

However you feel inside, *that's* who you are.

Besides...

...you'll be swatting the ladies away with your superhuman strength when they see you in *this*.

It's illogical, but somehow I feel 84% more confident than standard operating parameters.

How is that possible? It's just fabric.

It's *FASHION!*

Northstar, the fastest man alive, and *I'm* the one running around like a headless chicken.

BKOK?!

No offense, Mr. Cluck.

Thanks again for coming along to this, Kyle. I know all this super-hero stuff can get a bit crazy sometimes.

Literally one hundred percent of the times.

Ready for your close-up, Mr. Beaubier?

Let's move! Let's move! The show is about to start!

X-Men, Alpha Flight, X-Factor. I've been a part of so many groups over the years.

Sometimes it can be hard to hold on to who I am in all the chaos...

"...but at least once a year, I'm reminded that there's a group where I will *always* belong."

HE CAN SHATTER MY STAR ANY DAY!

WE LOVE YOU, NEGASONIC TEENAGE WARHEAD!

AMERICA, TAKE MY PHONE NUMBER!

Spectacular show, Jumbo. You must be proud.

ZZZZZZZ

THE END!

GIMMICK IN "TODAY'S LESSON"

"And that's when I was sure my dreams of being in *the X-Men* were over."

Oof!

Buddy Bartholomew's basement, Queens.

Come on, *Carmen*--it couldn't have been *that* bad.

It was *so* embarrassing, *Buddy*. And painful!

Mr. Bishop keeps *Triage* on healing duty for *training sessions*, but it felt like getting hit by a truck.

Well, clearly you didn't give up.

No, I think I *way* overcompensated.

Just take a deep breath and start from the *beginning*.

Krakoa. Earlier that day.

"Well, our opponent wasn't exactly a graceful winner.

Can I *please* be matched up with mutants on my skill level next time?

It was *one against five,* Transonic.

But noted. You're dismissed.

"And meeting your heroes is a lot less cool when you just keep *letting them down.*"

Hey, don't talk like that, Carmen.

It's not as if the *rest of your squad* did any better, right?

No, we're, like, definitely the *misfits.*

"*Graymalkin* has field experience but is pretty...sheltered. I think Mr. Bishop just wants him to make friends.

"I'm 99% sure he and *Specter* are an item, so I guess that worked? Dallas is a *Crucible kid*--lost his powers on M-Day. Now he's *way* overeager to use them.

"*D-Cel* used to insist she *wasn't* a mutant. I think she's gotten over that... but she still fronts pretty hard.

"And poor *Kafka* just wants to fly around in peace.

Ever going to ditch the Gambit cosplay, *Gimmick?*

I'm still working on designs...

Hey, Carmen just wants to stand out.

Why do you think *I* still wear my old Corsairs outfit?

Enough chitchat.

The five of you aren't acting like a *team.*

I used to struggle with that too. Sometimes, it takes experiencing *real* danger in the field for you to *trust--*

Sorry to interrupt class, Bishop. We've got a situation I thought you should know about.

What's going down, *Firestar?*

I got a ping about a couple of mutant teenagers harassing tourists in Central Park.

Ran a search on them--***Infestation*** and ***Snot***. They weren't exactly upstanding citizens ***before*** Krakoa, but now that you're keeping an eye on the younger generation...

The Treehouse, NYC.

You're letting me go collect these kids before ***the X-Men*** have to.

-Sigh-

Appreciate it, Firestar. I'll meet you at the Central Park gate in five.

"And that's when I did ***something stupid***, Buddy."

Wait! I... I have an idea...

I think?

YAGH! EWWW!

Central Park.

Don't you like my ***pets?***

Orchis is right about you--you ***freaks!***

Stay scared, flatscan!

SPLURCH

This is a ***terrible*** look for mutant-human relations.

Maybe if you two showed up for training sessions, you'd be able to channel your feelings in ***healthier*** ways.

Sorry, "Teach." We're not really in the learning mood anymore.

Krakoa's been holding us back, and your little Pit isn't so scary these days.

HISS

HAWK

PIT

Ew, gross!

NOW!

Using your morphing powers to catch the troublemakers off guard is *brave*, not stupid.

It was at least a *little* stupid.

Mr. Bishop can take a *much* harder hit than I can...

"...but it *did* give us the advantage of surprise."

Finally-- a chance to let loose!

Not *too* loose, Dallas.

Huh?!

Whuu wrong with muh snaht?

Yeah, that would be me *slowing* your mucus flow down to a dribble.

That, *uh*, leaves the other one to us, right?

Right. Carry me over her head and I'll--

Fangirl and butterfly boy? This is *too easy*.

SKITTER SKRRTCH SKKRRRAK

Can't you talk to insects?!

I can *understand* bug, not *speak* it!

SKRRTCH SKRRTCH SKKRRRAK

And I really, *really* wish I *didn't* know what these bugs were saying right now!

"Should we step in?"

Ahh, get them off of me!

Hehehehe!

I can't slow him much longer, guys!

Not yet.

Told these five they weren't acting like a team. Then Gimmick volunteers a plan for a *field mission?*

There's something to that one. I want to see how she plays it.

Now you've *really* ticked me off!

THWOMP

Argh!

Sorry, his runny nose is weirdly strong!

Need a boost, babe?

Yes, please.

I've got a *living shadow,* my boyfriend is super strong *in the dark,* and you...

...just got your #$%& wrecked!

SLAM

I'll slow him down before he crushes a taxi or something!

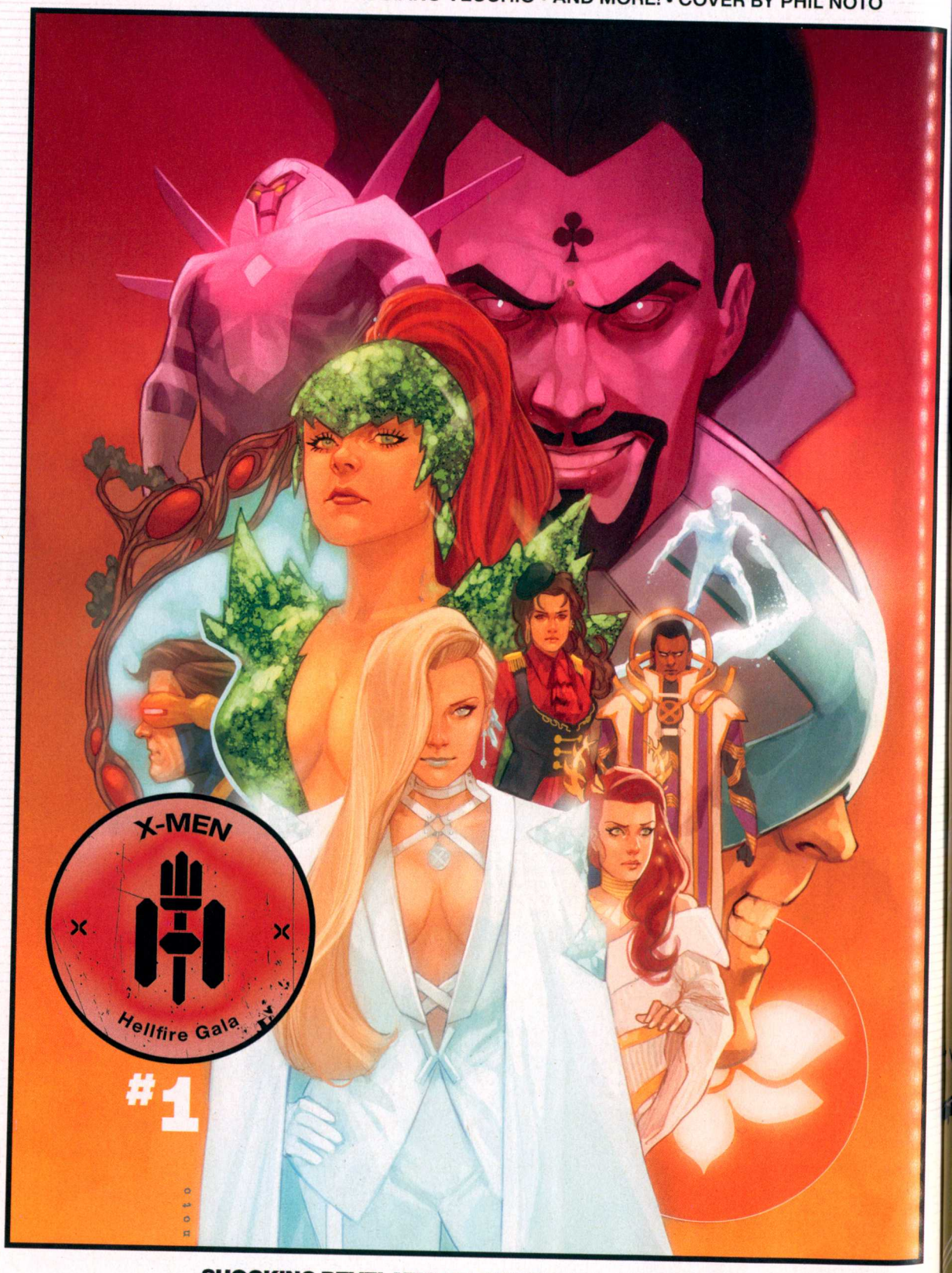
At least the--*hnhh*--others are doing--*argh*--okay!

Enough. I volunteered us for a field mission. I'm not letting it become a *complete* disaster.

I've been playing an X-Man...

THE FALL OF X BEGINS HERE!

GERRY DUGGAN • KRIS ANKA • JOSHUA CASSARA • RUSSELL DAUTERMAN • ADAM KUBERT
PEPE LARRAZ • R.B. SILVA • LUCIANO VECCHIO • AND MORE! • COVER BY PHIL NOTO



SHOCKING REVELATIONS, STUNNING BETRAYALS,
HORRIFYING TRAGEDY, IMPOSSIBLE DEATHS...
AND THE MOST GLAMOROUS LOOKS OF THE YEAR!

MARVEL
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JULY
2023

You are *not* committing to that catchphrase, right? It's no "clobberin' time."

It was in the moment! I'm workshopping it!

Anyway...

"...that's when things got a little *hellish.*"

Ugghhhhh...

Thought we'd get to *have our fun* a bit longer. Better cut to the end of *the plan* now.

Plan? What plan?

Plans sound bad, right?

Five minutes later.

We're losing them!

Do you know how hard--*shufft*--this is?!

BOOM

Pull over there! *NOW,* meatsack!

SCREEEEEECH

Open up!

We're here for the offer!

Oh #$%&. I think this might be above our paygrade now.

What do you--*oof*--mean?

The Limbo Embassy.

Oh.

Hell yeah!

SLAM

Nuh-uh, can't touch us in here.

We applied for a... *transfer.*

This isn't fair.

We were actually working *together...*

Sorry, Gimmick--

--Krakoa has *no authority* on the other side of those gates.

That's the deal.

...call this number for reimbursement of any damage suffered during...

Limbo's under new management and they're offering their own *amnesty.*

To some of the *nastiest #!%&@s* around.

So this was what...just a *joy-ride* before snot and Infestation got *another* clean slate?

If you'll follow me, we can begin the welcoming rituals.

This is gonna be *SICK!*

Your squad handled itself better in the field than it does during training, Gimmick.

Thanks in no small part to *you.* So don't see this as a bust.

Plus, your new look is *great.*

You're on an island of beautiful mutants, and you're flirting with the Avenger?
Oh my god, let her live!
Besides, she's too old for me...and I have you right here.
I'm very grateful, my hero.
Bummer outcome to the mission aside, I can see it now...
I really don't think I'm cut out for this.
"...Carmen Cruz, A.K.A. Gimmick...
"...future X-Men superstar!"
Hmm...
Gimmick joins the X-Men all right... but not the ones she expected! Pick up Dark X-Men #1 in August for the next chapter!

WHAT DOES MARVEL'S VOICES: PRIDE MEAN TO YOU?

This year marks Marvel's third MARVEL'S VOICES: PRIDE. After three anthologies and one trade paperback, we have gotten so much love and feedback from fans and readers new and old. So we wanted to give you, the readers, a chance to tell us exactly what the inclusion of diverse LGBTQIA+ and queer stories and storytellers have meant to you. Here are some of your responses!

I don't think people who aren't marginalized in some way can realize the immense power of seeing your experience reflected. To know it's not just you, but normal, expected, and rational to react and feel like that. It helps you see and acknowledge yourself.

—Charis Pollard

As a Marvel fan for my entire life, I've always relied on subtext and buried acknowledgment of character queerness to find myself in the books I loved. Seeing queer characters thrive in 2023 and, more specifically, queer comic creators become more prominent, has been a joy.

—Michael Foulk

They're evvvvvvvverything! These books fill me with joy and hope and, more times than not, a few tears. Love them.

—Brian Andersen

It means EVERYTHING to me and to my kids. Seeing rainbow families like ours represented as true heroes in the Marvel Universe—the biggest super-hero stage in the world—is something I could never have imagined when I was a kid, and I'm incredibly grateful. Representation matters!!!

—Meg Stocker

All of this is amazing! It is giving a voice and face to my friends who struggled finding their voice and face in the world of super heroes!

—Rachel Stark

"The world outside your window" has never been more relevant. For my queer teen, seeing all kinds of people in the panel and as the creators makes them feel seen.

—Bryan Gaffin

It makes the world feel like a more accepting place!

—Bekka Carter

Everyone wants the chance to be the hero, to be the cool kid, to be loved. Seeing heroes who look like us, who love like us, be loved and celebrated is healing. It's a reminder for those who need it most that the things that make us "different" don't make us "bad."

—Alex Stella

More than even seeing queer characters, it's nice to see these specials spotlight the queer creatives who have often been shortchanged in this industry and to hopefully see this opportunity lead to more long-form efforts from them.

—J. Mojica

The more diverse and representative comics get, the more excited I am to see them reflect the real world and, in doing so, help make a BETTER world.

—Michael M. Jones

To me, MARVEL'S VOICES: PRIDE specials are important reminders of the unfathomable, superhuman strength of every queer person who dares to live in a society that seems unrelentingly oppressive and hateful at every turn—that courage and bravery is always worth celebrating.

—Sam Shepherd

The MARVEL'S VOICES: PRIDE issues let me know that I'm safe and accepted, especially coupled with year-round representation and celebration. Marvel is a place for queer stories and people. Marvel's dedication to Pride is authentic and it shows.

—Sarah Seiders

It means visibility and legitimacy—characters who reflect reality. Thank you!

—Oliver Pulumbarit

Many of us have seen queerness in these characters for years, and in most cases, their queerness was only hinted at or alluded to. But now we are finally seeing heroes get to be their authentic queer selves, and it's been so heartening to see!

—Juls Martinez

As a bisexual kid growing up in West Texas, these outcasts and misfits finding a home with each other showed me that I could create my own family too within the LGBTQIA+ community. Acceptance and visibility are what I will always take away from these issues of MARVEL'S VOICES: PRIDE.

—Gabriel Arntt

It's made me so happy to see Marvel opening up and celebrating people like me. As the universe I escaped to when coming out in my teenage years, to see it become a place where the LGBTQIA+ can be more than just metaphors and allegories has been truly heartening.

—Joseph Glass

These MARVEL'S VOICES: PRIDE issues are literally everything. The "adult" that I am feels like I am able to time-travel to my youth to heal, celebrate, and live again. Visibility is forever a timeless importance.

—Nathaniel Ornelas

NEXT

Thanks for reading! Marvel Comics remains committing to providing inspiring, exhilarating, just sheer fricking FUN queer quality content all year long. Here is just a sampling of the gay goodness coming your way! Thank you for supporting queer creators and content—we couldn't do this without you.

BLACK CAT BY JED MacKAY OMNIBUS
ON SALE JULY 18!

LOVE UNLIMITED: GWENPOOL #43-48
AVAILABLE NOW ON MARVEL UNLIMITED!

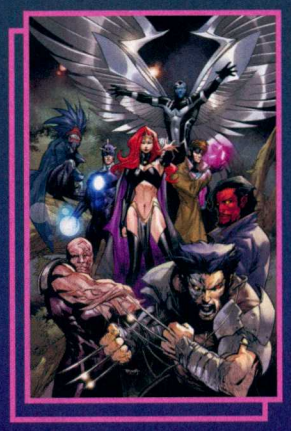
LOVE UNLIMITED: VIV VISION #7-12
AVAILABLE NOW ON MARVEL UNLIMITED!

LOKI #1
OUT NOW AND A PERFECT JUMPING-ON POINT!

NEW MUTANTS LETHAL LEGION #3
ON SALE NEXT WEEK! STARRING ESCAPADE, THE BREAKOUT STAR OF LAST YEAR'S *MARVEL'S VOICES: PRIDE!*

BETSY BRADDOCK: CAPTAIN BRITAIN #5
ON SALE NEXT WEEK!

SCARLET WITCH #6
ON SALE JULY 12!
FEATURING WICCAN & HULKLING!



DARK X-MEN #1
ON SALE IN AUGUST! FOLLOW GIMMICK INTO HER NEXT ADVENTURE!

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